



# THE GOTTSCHEE TREE

---

Newsletter of the History and Genealogy of Gottscheers  
and Their Descendants

---

Volume 1, Number 1

March 1987

---

## THE GOTTSCHEE TREE

This is the first issue of the newsletter, The Gottschee Tree. The objective of this newsletter is to bring together the Gottscheers and their descendants. Many descendants of the Gottscheers are now researching their family histories. This newsletter can be the vehicle through which information can be exchanged and knowledge shared.

The creation of The Gottschee Tree is a result of my own research into my family history and genealogy. I have come to realize there is a need to exchange information through a public format in order that everyone can contribute and benefit from another's knowledge of names, dates, etc. A newsletter seemed to be the best way to do this, especially if one does not live in Ridgewood or Cleveland where clubs and associations of Gottscheers still exist.

It is my hope this newsletter will be used by those who are currently researching their family history and/or genealogy, and read by those who just enjoy learning the history of their relatives from Gottschee.

---

### GERMAN AND SLOVENIAN NAMES

Prior to 1918, Gottschee was located in the province of Krain (also known as Carniola). Krain was part of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. After 1918, Krain became the northwestern boundary of Yugoslavia. The German names of the villages and the province were changed from German to Slovenian names. In the research of Gottschee family history one must learn the political divisions in both languages as many references today use the Slovenian name. Listed below are a few of the names in both languages.

	<u>Prior to 1918</u>	<u>After 1918</u>
Country:	Austria	Yugoslavia
Province:	Krain (Carniola)	Slovenia
City:	Gottschee	Kocevje
Township:	Nesseltal	Koprivnik
Village:	Schlechtbuchel	Slaba gorica
	Schaflein	Ovcjak

Source: "Das Jahrhundertbuch": Gottschee and its People Through the Centuries by Erich Petschauer.

### SPOTLIGHT ON...

#### JOSEPH KOBETITSCH (1881-1961)

In 1903, Joseph Kobetitsch, a citizen of Austria, left his village of Schlechtbuchel and traveled to the United States. His Austrian passport was written in two languages: German and Slovenian. The passport indicated that Joseph was from the political district of Gottschee.

The German language spoken by Joseph had its origin in a Bavarian-Austrian dialect. High German was the official language in business and education, while the Gottschee dialect was used in everyday communication.

While in Brooklyn, Joseph met Helen Hoge. Helen emigrated from the village of Rotenstein. They married in 1907 and made their home in Kansas City, Kansas where many of Joseph's relatives lived.

Joseph and Helen had eight children. Two of their children are still living in Kansas City. Today, the direct descendants of Joseph and Helen number seventy-two.

---

THE GOTTSCHEE TREE is published quarterly: March, June, September, and December by Liz Information Service, P. O. Box 725, Louisville, Colorado 80027. The introductory subscription rate is \$6.00 for the next four issues or \$2.00 per issue. Publisher/Editor: Elizabeth A. Nick. Copyright 1987.

EDITOR'S ROOTS IN GOTTSCHEE

My roots in Gottschee extend to both my maternal and paternal grandparents. Helen Hoge (1884-1937) and Joseph Kobetitsch (1881-1961) were my maternal grandparents. In Gottschee, Helen lived in the village of Rotenstein, House #17. Joseph was born in Schlechtbuchel, House #1. Helen and Joseph met in Brooklyn, were married in 1907, and lived in Kansas City, Kansas.

John Nick (1886-1920), my paternal grandfather, was born in Schaflein, House #9. Katherina Fugina (1884-1920) and John Nick met each other in the United States. They were married in Brooklyn in 1907 and made their home in Kansas City.

Joseph and John knew each other when they lived in Gottschee. Their friendship continued to grow after their arrival in the United States, and was strengthened by the marriage of their first-born children: Helen Kobetitsch married William Carl Nick in 1929.

INFORMATION IN CITY DIRECTORIES

An old City Directory contains a wealth of information about individuals who lived in a particular city. Local libraries usually have the directories of their city.

The types of information contained in these directories include the names of individuals, their address (and in a 1909 Kansas City Directory, whether they were a resident or a boarder at that address), occupation, place of employment, and if the person was a widow or widower.

These directories are free to anyone to read at the library. It is useful in locating persons with the same surname or to verify where relatives lived. And it is one of the inexpensive methods in obtaining facts.

GOTTSCHEEERS IN KANSAS CITY

Some of the people from Gottschee settled in St. Joseph, Missouri and in the Kansas City area. A few of the names of individuals that settled in the Kansas City area are printed in a book Gottscheer Gedenkbuch by John Kikel.

The names that appear in the book were contributors to the Gottscheer Association. The names are arranged according to the village where one lived in Gottschee. Each name is followed by a number which indicates the house in the village where they lived. The address of the individual's residence in the 1940s is also included. The material is arranged by all the villages within a township. Following is a list of surnames of individuals that lived in Kansas City.

- |            |                  |
|------------|------------------|
| Agnitsch   | Nick             |
| Gestel     | Schniderschitsch |
| Jermann    | Sedler           |
| Jonke      | Stimpfe          |
| Kobetitsch | Tramposch        |
| Kovak      | Vivodinar        |
| Mantel     | Vogrin           |
| Meditz     | Zagar            |

One method of determining the names of Gottscheers who made their home in Kansas City is to contact their descendants. If your grandparents or parents settled in the Kansas City area and their names are not on the list, send the information to the Editor of this newsletter. The name of the individual and the village where they lived (if known) will be published in the next issue. Credit will be given to those who submit any information.

This information will aid those who are researching their family history. It will also help to establish the number of Gottscheers that settled in the Kansas City area.

THE BAVARIAN HIDE

In Gottschee, the Bavarian "hide" was a measure of land to determine the size of a village and the ownership of land. One "hide" was approximately 20 hectares (Petschauer 1984:45). One hectare is 2.471 acres (Webster's Dictionary 1961:530).



PETSCHAUER'S HISTORY OF GOTTSCHEE

Petschauer's "Das Jahrhundertbuch": Gottschee and its People Through the Centuries, is an excellent historical account of the people and places of Gottschee. Petschauer begins with a brief survey followed by events that took place from the 11th through the 13th century, the beginnings of the linguistic island of Gottschee. The events of each century are described, ending with the historical events of the 20th century when the Gottscheers were forced from their homeland during the early part of the 1940s.

A "Register of Villages" contains information from a register dated 1574 and a census taken in 1770. Data include the number of houses in a village, the name in both German and Slovenian, the amount of land owned, and other facts such as "the transporting of wood to the castle as a 'feudal duty" from the 1574 register (page 199).

DATA EXCHANGE

Subscribers can use this publication to share facts and historical data found in their research of family history. The source or other documentation (for example, found in the family bible) of the facts presented in this newsletter must be included. The subscriber's name and address will be included in the article.

DEADLINES FOR QUERIES

All queries must be received by the editor by the first day of the month in which the newsletter is published. The deadlines are June 1, September 1, and December 1.

This is one of the few historical accounts of Gottschee published in the English language. There are English translations of German words throughout the text, and usually the name of the village is written in both German and Slovenian. This book is a valuable resource for anyone researching their family roots from Gottschee.

The book can be purchased from the Gottscheer Relief Association, 657 Fairview Avenue, Ridgewood, New York 11385. When I purchased the book in the fall of 1986 the cost was \$20.00 plus \$1.50 for postage.

QUERIES

This is where questions pertaining to family history and genealogy will appear in future newsletters. Subscribers may submit one query per issue. The name and address of the person submitting the query must be included and will be printed with the query.

Example:

(I) I am requesting information on Gertrude and Catherine Rositsch (Rozić). A copy of John Nick's marriage license indicates that his mother's name was Catherine Rositsch. However relatives have told me his mother's first name was Gertrude. Is it possible that John's father married twice...was Catherine his first wife, and was Gertrude his second wife and therefore the mother of John's two younger brothers? I would appreciate any information from members of the Rositsch (Rozić) family. Submitted by Elizabeth Nick, 174 South Hoover Avenue, Louisville, Colorado 80027.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

The introductory subscription rate for the next four issues is \$6.00. To subscribe to The Gottschee Tree, complete the subscription form and mail with payment to: Liz Information Service P. O. Box 725 Louisville, Colorado 80027-0725

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Kikel, John  
1947 Gottscheer Gedenkbuch  
1330-1947. New York: Gottscheer Relief  
Association, Inc.

The publication of this book was the result of Gottscheers in the U.S. contributing funds to aid Gottscheers in Europe who were forced to leave their homeland during the war. According to Petschauer (1984:146-149), the Gottscheer Relief Association in Ridgewood was created in 1946. Contact was made with over 2,000 U.S. Gottschee families. Those who made contributions to the relief effort and paid for advertisements are listed in Kikel's book.

In the first part of the book, Kikel's historical descriptions of the Gottscheer associations in the United States is written in German followed by an English translation. In the second part, townships are described (in German), followed by a list of the villages within a particular township. After each village

name is a list of former residents including the house number of the individual. Kikel's book is invaluable as a resource in Gottschee family research.

Petschauer, Erich

1984 "Das Jahrhundertbuch":Gottschee and its People Through the Centuries. Completed by Hermann Petschauer, Translated by Herma Moscher. New York: Gottscheer Relief Association, Inc. (See review on page 3.)

Prince, John D.

1931 The Gottschee Germans of Slovenia. American Philosophical Society Proceedings. Volume 70, Number 4:391-398.

A short article that gives a brief sketch of the language spoken by the people of Gottschee. Prince lists some of the differences between the modern German language and the Gottschee dialect.

LIZ INFORMATION SERVICE

P. O. Box 725

Louisville, Colorado 80027-0725