

# GCS

German-Canadian Studies at The University of Winnipeg

**Happy Holidays!  
Frohe Festtage!**

**\$25,000  
Fellowship  
Program  
- see inside!**



## Students Explore German-Canadian Roots

By Jamie Smith

A unique high school project has unfolded in Walkerton, Ontario. Mr Jamie Smith and his grade 12 Canadian History class have undertaken a project to preserve the oral tradition of Walkerton, Ontario.

By studying the history of the local German butcher shop the students sought to explore and document the history of the entire town by digitally recording the oral testimonies of its inhabitants, researching the history of the Walkerton Meat Market, and then creating a documentary. The DVD was encased and then preserved in a town time capsule during recent Homecoming celebrations. Copies of the interviews were deposited in the local archives at the Bruce County Museum and Cultural Center.

The students had much of the responsibility for individual workstations and the role of the teacher was to facilitate the process and guide the students through the research, interviewing, and editing process. Once the documentary was complete the students conducted a number of in-depth extension activities involving German immigrants to their region. Facts gleaned and recorded from the interviews were incorporated into each individual assignment.

The entire process culminated in a German Heritage Fair which showcased all that the students had uncovered about Walkerton including food, period costumes and ethnic dancing! If you want to learn more visit the study website at [www.walkertonhistory.20fr.com](http://www.walkertonhistory.20fr.com).

The work of the students has garnered the thanks of the community as its progress has been tracked by many who follow the local press. Components of the study have been in local newspapers, TV, and radio broadcasts. The 'Walkerton Heritage Study' has recently been selected as a finalist for the Governor General's Award For Excellence In Teaching History. The project was supported by the Chair in German-Canadian Studies through academic advice and a research grant. The Chair congratulates Mr Smith and his students on the successful completion of their project, which has already stimulated similar projects in other provinces.



Jamie Smith (front row, third from right) and his Grade 12 Canadian History students.

# New GCS Fellowship Program offers \$25,000 in Scholarships, Grants, and Awards

The Chair in German-Canadian Studies is pleased to announce the Spletzer Family Foundation Inc. German-Canadian Studies Fellowship Program 2007. The aim of this new fellowship program is to support excellence in research in German-Canadian Studies at various levels of scholarship and in a broad range of communities.

The Research Scholarship Program awards a Ph.D. scholarship on a biennial basis. The scholarship of CAD 13,000 annually can be renewed once. It is open to doctoral students at universities in Canada and abroad. Students must have completed their course work and use the funds to conduct research in German-Canadian Studies in Canada. At the Master's level, the Scholarship Program offers an annual, non-renewable scholarship of CAD 9,000. It is open to students in any field of research at a Canadian or foreign university to conduct research in German-Canadian Studies in Canada.

The German-Canadian Studies Research Grant is open to everyone who wishes to conduct research or plan a project in the field of German-Canadian Studies. It is directed, for example, at K-12 school teachers wishing to conduct a class project in German-Canadian Studies or at independent scholars, artists, filmmakers, etc. planning a project in German-Canadian Studies. It is open to Canadian residents as well as to non-residents wishing to use the grant toward research or project-related activities in Canada.

The German-Canadian Studies Undergraduate Essay of CAD 500 is awarded once a year to the best essay written by an undergraduate student at a Canadian university.

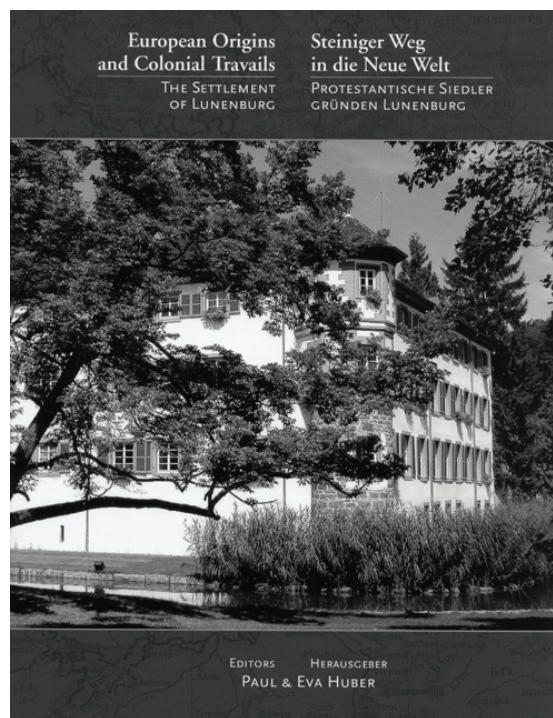
For more information on the awards and application forms, please go to <http://germancanadian.uwinnipeg.ca>. The deadline for all scholarships, grants, and awards is 15 April 2007.

## Rezension

Paul und Eva Huber, Hrsg. *European Origins and Colonial Travails. The Settlement of Lunenburg/Steiniger Weg in die Neue Welt*. Protestantische Siedler gründen Lunenburg. Halifax, Nova Scotia: Messenger Publications, 2003. (192 Seiten. ISBN: 0-9733387-1-7. CAD 45,00 brosch., CAD 60,00 gebunden, inkl. MwSt., Porto u. Versand. Bestellungen: Messenger Publications, 18 Armshore Drive, Halifax, NS B3N 1M5, Tel.: 902-477-9802, Fax: 902-477-2346, Email: evahuber@chebucto.ns.ca).

Dieser reich bebilderte Band beschreibt die Gründung und Besiedelung Lunenburgs in Neuschottland (Nova Scotia) durch die "Foreign Protestants" in der Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts. Anfang der 1750er Jahre warb die britische Regierung Protestanten auf dem europäischen Kontinent an, um ihre militärische und wirtschaftliche Lage gegenüber den französischen und katholischen Siedlern in dieser Region (Akadien) des nordamerikanischen Kontinents zu stärken. Die meisten Einwanderer kamen zwischen 1749 und 1752 aus Deutschland, insbesondere der Kurpfalz, aber auch aus Frankreich, der Schweiz und den Niederlanden. 1753 gründeten sie Lunenburg, das vor einigen Jahren sein 250jähriges Bestehen feierte.

In ihren Beiträgen beschreiben die Autoren nicht nur diese Wanderung und Besiedelung, sondern gehen den



Fragen nach, warum die kontinentaleuropäischen Protestanten den Ruf nach Englands überhaupt gefolgt sind und welchen Einfluß sie heute noch auf die Stadt und die Region ausüben. Andere Beiträge beschäftigen sich damit, wie die Auswanderer die Überfahrt erlebten (und überlebten), warum sie im Dezember 1753 in Lunenburg rebellierten und wie sie sich gegen Assimilierungsversuche wehrten. Viele dieser kurzen Beiträge wurden ursprünglich im Neuschottländer Boten veröffentlicht.

Neben den historischen Entwicklungen und Ereignissen werden die Herkunftsorte der ersten Siedler vorgestellt. Dazu gehören Dörfer in der

Pfalz, freie Reichsstädte und eine Reihe weiterer Ortschaften in Deutschland, sowie Orte in Frankreich, Montbéliard (Mömpelgard) und der Schweiz. Die Photos, die die Herausgeber bei ihrem Besuch der knapp 90 Orte im Juli 2002 gemacht haben, zeigen Gebäude und andere Objekte, die bereits zur Zeit der Auswanderung bestanden. Die Beiträge sind in englischer, deutscher oder französischer Sprache, und zum Teil in zwei dieser Sprachen.



# In der Ferne zu Hause: German Emigrants in Canada From 1983 Until Today

By Ulrike Pape

*Ms Ulrike Pape recently graduated from the University of Göttingen, Germany with a 150-page Diplomarbeit (thesis) titled "In der Ferne zu Hause: Sozio-biografische Studien zu Motivation und Lebenssituation deutscher Kanada-Auswanderer von 1983 bis heute." Her research was supported by the Chair in German-Canadian Studies' Fellowship Program. Below is an abbreviated version of her report.*

The topic of emigration has recently been on the public agenda in Germany: According to the results of a poll by the "Marplan-Institut" in Offenbach, every third German dreams of moving to a different country. The Federal Statistical Office's latest numbers reveal that more and more Germans are realizing this dream: 145,000 residents left the country in 2005, which is the highest level of emigration since 1954. Among them, 3,029 went to Canada. Most studies in this field still refer to the high numbers of German emigrants in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In contrast, my study "In der Ferne zu Hause" investigates the recent German migration to Canada. It is based on interviews with twelve German immigrants who moved to Vancouver, BC over the last 23 years. My study seeks to answer three questions:

**Why do Germans immigrate to Canada today?** The interviewees state lack of future prospects, longing for adventure and self-realization as key motives for migrating out of Germany. These yearnings and desires are built on a variety of complex causes that are shaped by individual life courses as well as long-term historical processes of secularization, individualization, and globalization.

Previous stays abroad, travels, or moves prepare and conduce towards the major step to Canada. Nevertheless, interviewees who are rooted in their

home region or who are settled with their profession leave as well: The urge of devising one's biography prevails over inner engagements, objections, and doubts as well as over external circumstance or resistance, e.g. social ties in Germany. The interviewees frequently hold "Germany" or "the Germans" responsible for their departure: They often feel restricted or frustrated by perceived repressive bureaucracy in Germany, which in many cases, however, is interlinked with personal matters. Experiences of loss of loved ones play a decisive role in their feelings of inner emptiness. Likewise, disappointments with friends or acquaintances can also cause feelings of being misunderstood or out of place and result in disillusionment and lack of ideas and goals. Moving to a different place may make up for missing social or professional ties and emotional bonds.

## **How do German migrants evaluate their decision from today's perception and situation?**

The decision to emigrate is a maturing process shaped by both reason and emotion and based on the interviewee's respective situation and life story. As the emigrants' ongoing attempts to confirm their resolution reveal, their decision of going abroad is to be seen as made but nevertheless incomplete. It remains a tightrope act. As the partially arbitrary and subjective decision to emigrate may not always be understandable to others and even to themselves, various modes of evaluation assure the emigrants in their decision before and after going to Canada. One mode of evaluation is the perception of the emigration as an opportunity. The chance to emigrate arises from a unique situation and relieves the interviewees of the decision. Their secular thoughts of a non-repeatable life evoke constraints to either act "now, or never."

How have their relationships to Germany changed in the process of migration?

The interviewees are involved in both Germany and Canada. One way this occurs is by keeping in touch with the ones they left behind, and at the same time socializing with locals in Vancouver. However, this process of acculturation is not even. For example, their professional integration is easier to manage than their social one: The major challenge for the interviewed emigrants is to find and make close friendships with Canadians. Corresponding to their aspiration of being different and individual, they initially distance themselves from other Germans and prefer contact with locals. This is followed by a phase of re-approach to Germans. Eventually, an international circle of friends emerges. This international orientation is also apparent in their German networking, which differs from postwar German immigrants. Instead of the German house "Alpenklub," the Internet is their meeting point.

With respect to national identity and feelings of belonging, the interviewed emigrants feel involved in and attached to both Germany and Canada. This double identity and involvement corresponds to transnational ideas that meet their spirit of non-committal individualism as the emigrants do not have to commit themselves to one nationality only. Canada's multicultural politics and society facilitate such a transcultural identity as it permits dual citizenship (albeit only in exceptions in the German case) and active maintenance of their ethnic roots.

The Chair in German-Canadian Studies congratulates Ms Pape on the successful completion of her studies and wishes her luck in her future endeavors.



The Chair in German-Canadian Studies was established in 1989 with grants from the Secretary of State's Program for Canadian Ethnic Studies and a group of private philanthropists within the German-Canadian community of Winnipeg. It is located in, and affiliated with, the History Department at the University of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The Chair promotes the teaching of, and research into the history and culture of German-speaking immigrants and their descendants in Canada. It interacts with the German-Canadian community in Winnipeg, Manitoba and the rest of Canada through public lectures and the newsletter. The Chair promotes regional, national and international research through conferences, publications and grants.

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Unless otherwise stated, all articles were written by Alexander Freund  
Submissions of articles, news, reports, and reviews as well as artwork and photos for publication in this newsletter are welcome.

## Book Review

*A History of Migration from Germany to Canada, 1850-1939.* By Jonathan Wagner. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 2006. ix + 284 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. \$85.00 cloth, \$29.95 paper.

By Hans Werner (University of Winnipeg)

Most German speakers who came to Canada came from Eastern Europe, and as a result, the story of those who came directly from the *Reich* has often fallen between the cracks. The low numbers of migrants coming directly from Germany also means that Jonathan Wagner's study of that migration is really more about explaining Canada's failure to attract Germans than about their actual migration. It seems, according to Wagner, that Canada's later and less complete transformation to an industrial economy is to blame for this failure. It meant that Canada was seeking immigrants to farm the wide-open spaces of the Canadian prairies in a Germany that was a more advanced industrialized nation with few farmers left to be attracted.

Focussing on the period 1850 to 1939, and following a chronological sequence, each chapter of Wagner's book examines the political and economic realities of Canada and Germany, the methods of recruiting or restricting migrants, the agents and agencies that assisted them, and the conditions of travel. The format leads to some repetition and Wagner is forced to return frequently to the same conclusions: Canada's recruitment policies and promotional efforts were out of step with realities in Germany; its bias towards British immigrants prevented capturing a significant portion of the large flow of Germans to North America.

The strength of Wagner's analysis comes in his interesting and careful analysis of the role of propaganda, immigration agencies, and agents who tried to stimulate and help Germans to come to Canada. He gives the reader rare and important insights into the emigration climate in Germany and explains how an image of Canada, particularly the Canadian West, was created. He compares that image to the portrayal of the American West that Germans found in the widely read novels of James Fenimore Cooper and native German authors such as the popular Karl May, who emulated Cooper's style. The more "peaceful, hardworking, sober, responsible" (39) Canada portrayed by Germans who had travelled in Canada and had their reflections paid for and published by the Canadian government, could not compete with this romanticized American West.

Wagner's approach is refreshing. He avoids narrow interpretations of the German-Canadian experience, but chooses to use modernization and industrialization as the framework to explain the process of German migration to Canada. While his stated purpose may not be completely fulfilled, Wagner's study of German migration to Canada fills an important void in our understanding of host and sending countries response to migration. In particular his analysis of the production of images and perceptions of migration process sheds new light on a neglected area of migration studies.



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