

# Our Unique Brazilian Journey

from 10 October to 1 November 1999

I would like to summarize as follows.

by Martin Holz

Translation by John Dromey, Quincy IL

In the first place, Hildegard and I would like to thank whole-heartedly our friend Professor Valberto Dirksen from Florianópolis for the invitation and the organization of our trip. In the second place, I want to thank my Hildegard because she recorded the important events of each day of the vacation. It would not have been possible to have written an account of our journey in this chronological order from memory. Thanks are due also to our daughter Sabina, who as a trained secretary, with no “ifs, ands, or buts”, first took the text of the diary and prepared an unfinished version with her personal computer. We have tried to present our journey and our perceptions in an easy-to-read style. I hope that we succeeded.

Hildegard and I traveled together in the United States of America five times. Each journey had its appeal and its really special experiences that one never forgets. The Brazilian journey with its different emphasis was very rich in experiences and surpassed our expectations. We thank God, and all who arranged and in anyway were involved in our journey. Participating in the golden wedding anniversary of Nilsa and Emilio Berkenbrock with over 500 guests was one of the major highlights of our journey. Of course, the receptions by Bishop Tito Buss in Rio do Sul and by Bishop Vito Schlickmann in Florianópolis were unforgettable experiences for us. We will never forget the kindness, hospitality, affection, and modesty of the people with whom we became acquainted. Also, we were impressed by the deeply-held religious views of the people. Very many people expect help and strengthening from their faith in God. Becoming personally acquainted with like-minded individuals gives us even more motivation to achieve together our acknowledged objective in emigration research. The reader can certainly understand that I feel like I'm an ambassador for the Brazilians of German origin. The very great interest of Brazilian descendants of 19th-Century emigrants to get to know the roots of their origin in Germany gave me the confirmation that our research group has been doing the right thing and working successfully for many years. At this point, I want to heartily give thanks also for the help of the Brazilian research group. Only together will we reach our objectives.

We felt a great need to pay for a snack at a cafe for the likable hosts who provided their vehicle, the gas, and their free time for us to have at our disposal. We're almost always successful. We were astonished that the cost of living, especially for food and drinks, is very low, although the *Real* is almost equal in value to our DM (*Deutsche Mark*). We've recorded the payments in writing, for comparison with our prices in the restaurant trade.

We were also fascinated by the still-living tradition of using Low German speech in the „Brazilian Münsterland“. The wonderful dialect of Münsterland had survived over five generations without influences of the language of the country, Portuguese. We heard very old, Low German idiomatic expressions that here in the German core of Münsterland already are worn out or lost. We established, however, that in the generations coming after the immigration only the “*Klei*” Low German of the core of Münsterland became generally accepted. In our conversations we did not hear the dialect of the “*Sand*” Low German of West Münsterland used.

We learned for example that the doctors in “Brazilian Münsterland” as a matter of principle have a Low-German-speaking assistant at their side during consultation hours, provided that the respective

doctor himself has not mastered our dialect.

What seems interesting to us was the following idiomatic expression which was common in the 19th and 20th Centuries in Brazil and still is today. If someone spoke of Germany, or speaks of Germany, he says, "He/It comes from 'over there.'" Not far from São Martinho there's a very small place with the name *Alemanha* (Germany). When inhabitants of the "Brazilian Muensterland" have made a flying visit to the little place, they say with mischievous pride, "We were over there."

It was possible in friendly company to mix a drink in a large glass with varying ingredients, very often with sugar cane schnapps. This filled glass then made its convivial rounds. Valberto explained an unwitting visiting lecturer had looked at the contents of the filled glass as his own and drank it down to the bottom. The lecture therefore did not take place: it fell through, that is, figuratively, it "fell in the water (schnapps)."

For the majority of the colonists the growing of sugar cane, which was processed in the sugar factories, was up to about 20 years ago the principal source of occupations. After the import of sugar from Cuba became a good value, this source of income for the colonists came to a standstill.

A large percentage of the colonists in the "Brazilian Münsterland" grow tobacco. It is at the present time a reliable source of income, because the final price of harvested, dried tobacco is already established at the planting. In an overwhelming majority of the tall drying sheds today, the temperature and humidity for the curing process of the tobacco is regulated by drying machines. With the traditional manual drying a great deal of specialist knowledge and experience was called for on the part of the colonists in the curing phase. The open fire had to be fueled and watched day and night, so that the temperature remained constant in the drying room. The colonists, during the time of the drying processes, often had their resting-place for the night set up in a storehouse beside the fire, in order to put some more combustible material on the fire at required intervals.

Without carrying out a far-reaching investigation, we want to draw attention to the *Favelas*, as follows. Mainly in Florianópolis, we saw for kilometers to the left and right of the big divided road wretched human dwellings which in Brazil are called Favelas. From all sorts of bulky refuse, what in our estimation are more than degrading accommodations, are put up with joint effort overnight, of course without a building permit, in stark contrast to the wonderful silhouette of the city of Florianópolis with its above average style of home furnishings. The illegal occupation of city property along the roads is a thorn in the eye of the city. If by day the shacks are removed by means of bulldozers by order of the city, in the night unwanted new dwellings are again built. The city has built large residential blocks with a low rent for those without much money, so that through resettlement they can again fit into society. A large part of the Favelas-dwellers spurn the better style of housing and prefer the degrading and inhumane way of life in the shacks. Many Favelas-dwellers and their ancestors were born into this milieu and don't want people to feel sorry for them. It is not conceivable for us that a healthy steadfast citizen from the middle class could be derived thus from the lower asocial milieu.

In Brazil there is a saying of the legendary three Vs for **vergessen (to forget)**, **verhaßt (hated)**, **verehrt (honored)** that gave me cause for much thought, and I asked about the background of these statements in Brazil.

**Vergessen: (to forget):** I was told that after the immigration in the 19th Century and the assigning of their intended area of primeval forest by the Brazilian government, the German colonists were left alone. One believes probably that the single-mindedness, the diligence, and the unbroken will of the Germans were prerequisites enough for them to make the best out of this pioneer work for a new stage in their lives for themselves and the coming generations.

**Verhaßt: (hated):** In the beginning, as also in World War II, the Brazilians of German origin were subject to constant repressive measures by the Brazilian government. The German language, their customs, and the fostering of cultural life were stopped with violence and drastic punishments. Amplifying on this subject is a small report by Martin Gesler in the daily newspaper the FAZ (*Frankfurter-Allgemeinen-Zeitung*) from 22 July 1987: "First

forget, then pursue, and now marvel at” gives a vivid description about the time of fear, of spying on, and humiliation of the Brazilians of German descent.

At the end of the 30s, then, the Pomeranians were restrained by big politics. With Decree 7614 dictator Getulio Vargas, who dreamed of a unified national people, prescribed the Portuguese language for “foreign” schools and organizations also. When Brazil declared war against the Axis Powers in 1942, even the German language was banned. That led to Hans and Fritz not talking to each other during recess, and mothers on the streetcar holding their hands over their children's mouth, if they called her “*Mutti*” (German for “Mom”) instead of the prescribed “*mamã*.” An elderly Pomeranian even told that his father was repeatedly let go for half a day because he had spoken German to his horses. German names disappeared from the map or from the index of organizations; German documents were stuck in a trunk. Pomerania turned into Rio do Testo. When Pomeranians finally were again permitted to speak Pomeranian, only a damp lump remained from the community papers displayed on the floor of the local municipal building. So it comes about that the time before 1924 for Pastor Liesenberg and his Pomeranians today is a “no longer to be cleared up secret.” A while back, at the start, the hard-working “*teutos*” did not have the leisure to reminisce for him. Then he was deprived of their history. The past decades meanwhile have shown that with the banning and the prosecuting an anyway unavoidable development was simply intensified.

**Verehrt:** (**honored**): The renewed intellectual integration of Brazilians of German origin took place in large measure after World War II. The genetic make-up of virtues with which they were fortified by their immigrating ancestors helped the German-Brazilians to a recognition of their achievements and their honor.

The director of our journey, Valberto Dirksen, had planned very prudently for each day of our vacation to have a required rest break. We simply went with the tide of the events, surprises, and the high points. Hildegard and I want to give many thanks to everyone with whom we became acquainted in our three weeks in Brazil for their receptiveness and warmth. When you get to know the Brazilians well, then you simply have to like them. We and the other members of the study group „Münsterland's Brazilian Emigrants“, Alfred Efting from Dorsten, Norbert Henkelmann from Münster, and Ingrid Seliger from Rosendahl-Osterwick offer best wishes to all the descendants from Münsterland's families who emigrated to Brazil, and to all those we, acting as representatives, were permitted to become closely-acquainted with in Brazil.

**I ask that readers in Brazil and in the Administrative District of Münster (Germany) let me know about it, if they know of an emigrant to Brazil from their family or their circle of friends. Our study group would be very grateful if emigrant letters were made available to us for analysis and evaluation. When reported emigrations are recorded by us, then they are often an additional source of information that's a valuable research aid.**

**In the name of the Study Group “Münsterland’s Brazilian Emigrants” [„Münsterländische Brasilienauswanderer“]**

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The bold, italic underlined words are “Links” for Internet sites (Hyperlink) which can be called up with a mouseclick.

**Rosendahl** (["www.rosendahl.de"](http://www.rosendahl.de)) **Mormon Library site** (["http://www.familysearch.org"](http://www.familysearch.org))

**Site for “Westfälische Gesellschaft für Genealogie und Familienforschung” (Westphalia Society for Genealogy and Family Research)** (["http://www.westfalengen.de"](http://www.westfalengen.de)) **Geschichtliche Territorien Nordrhein-Westfalens im Jahre 1789** (<http://www.nrw-geschichte.de/index.html>)

## Informationen zur Geschichte Brasiliens in deutscher Fassung.

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/> (thomas@kippenhan.net)

### Präsident Cardoso, Fernando Henrique

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/fhc.htm>

### Daten

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/br1.htm>

### Klima

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/brklima.htm>

### Flora und Fauna

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/brflora.htm>

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<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/brvolk.htm>

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<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/brbild.htm>

### Kultureinrichtungen, Kunst, Musik, Medien

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/brkultur.htm>

### Industrie, Währung, Bankwesen, Außenhandel

### Gewerkschaften, Verkerswesen, Energie

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/brindus.htm>

### Chronik

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/chronik.htm>

### Land

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/br2.htm>

### Flüsse und Seen

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/br3.htm>

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<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/brpolit.htm>

### Wirtschaft, Land-u.Forstwirtschaft, Bergbau

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/breco.htm>

### Geschichte Brasiliens

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/brgesch.htm>

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<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/nationbr.htm>

### Die Deutsche Nationalhymne

<http://www.kippenhan.net/brasil/nationde.htm>



*Brasilien*



## Informationen zur Geschichte Brasiliens in portugiesischer Fassung.

### Brasil, Território e recursos

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# Our Brazilian Journey from

10 October to 1 November 1999

by Hildegard and Martin Holz

**Sunday, 10 October 1999**

At 2:30 a.m. the alarm clock rang, a signal to get ready for the already-for-a-long-time-planned big journey to another continent. Sabina came at 3:00 a.m. to take us in her car to the Münster/ Osnabrück airport. After a three-quarters of an hour drive, we arrived at the airfield at 4.15 a.m., punctual as always. Our luggage was checked in right away to São Paulo. We two were now alone on our great journey. Sabina made her way back home again with the idea of picking us up again at the end of our journey, hopefully well, at the Münster/Osnabrück airport.

We took off in a Boeing 737 (103 seats) at 6:30 a.m. and landed in Frankfurt at 7:15 a.m. After a long wait we took off for São Paulo at 12:13 p.m. in a MacDonnell Douglas (MD 11), which provided places for 267 passengers of the Brazilian airline Varig.

The Captain Marcos Passos, his copilot, and two flight engineers took care to give us a smooth flight. The remaining crew consisted of 12 flight attendants. We covered the 9804 kilometers from Frankfurt to São Paulo in 11 hours at an average altitude of 10700 meters. We had two reserved seats next to each other, so that we had a little more freedom of movement. First of all we treated ourselves to a cool beer. During the flight we were well provided with substantial food and drinks. By means of the flight monitor, one could comprehend at irregular intervals the air route with the current position of the airplane, altitude, outside temperature, and the distance in kilometers from our destination, São Paulo. To prevent boredom one could occupy himself with reading, or also watch a movie with the synchronized sound coming through headphones. Martin frequently took a stroll through the giant bird to limber up his joints. After a quiet flight without turbulence we landed in São Paulo at 7:38 p.m.

First we had to accept our luggage from the conveyor belt in order to take it through the international customs check in the national customs area. We managed that well, but now what was coming next for us?

But then we saw, as arranged, Father Raymundo Weihermann. He carried a piece of paper with our names "Martin and Hildegard Holz" in large lettering. After his welcoming, he invited us to have some coffee. He wanted to get to know us and to be helpful with the next check-in for the flight to Florianópolis. He paid for the check-in cost for our luggage against our wishes. Now we had time for talking. Martin gave him his book *Elsen*, as a gift, and the genealogical review of the Weihermann family, so far as he had it worked out. He spoke about their mutual Voerding family relatives. After Father Raymundo Weihermann explained to me the usual Brazilian greeting, namely three little kisses changing sides of the cheek, we waited in another hall for the connecting flight. Because of our conversation the time was not long. The leave-taking of Father Raymundo in the Brazilian style was warm. We appreciated his help very much. We rode in a bus across the airfield to the airplane that took off after a considerable delay. I find it very impressive when one goes along the runway. A brief glance back at the earth at the moment when the path continues through airspace. The sea of lights of the major city São Paulo, seen from a bird's perspective, was simply fascinating. In 40 minutes we put the distance to Florianópolis behind us.

Valberto was already fairly worried because our airplane, also a Boeing 737, was the last plane that landed at Florianópolis that day. Valberto had already called Father Raymundo Weihermann, who'd

returned to São Paulo, to ask about the reason for the delay. We learned then from Valberto that Father Raymundo had to cover 50 kilometers within the city limits of São Paulo to reach the *Herz-Jesu* (Sacred Heart) motherhouse from the airport. First of all we had to get used to the vast expanses.

We were happy when we could finally greet Valberto. The joy on both sides was great. It was by now almost 12 o'clock midnight. Dulce had waited for us at home. We drank a cup of tea then fell wearily into bed. Valberto had a beautiful new house in which one could feel very much at ease. Now we had arrived at the provisional destination of our great journey.

### **Monday, 11 October 1999**

We slept until 9:00 a.m. After breakfast the trip in Valberto's robust VW began. First, Valberto showed us magnificent sights, then we visited stores, all gigantic as in America, and then at noon we went to a restaurant where the food was paid for by weight, a totally new reckoning method for us. I ate for 1.98 *Reais*. The rate of exchange of the two currencies at the moment is such that the value of the *Real* is somewhat similar to that of our DM (*Deutsche Mark*). After that we allowed ourselves an after-lunch sleep. Finally, Valberto took us to the bank, and calmly showed us the old city of Florianópolis. I bought stones (rocks) for 10 Reais at the market. We took the evening meal at the house. At 11:30 p.m. we went to sleep.

### **Tuesday, 12 October 1999**

After breakfast, at 10:00 a.m. we traveled over bumpy roads to the coast: old houses, a simply wonderful beach as far as one could see. The ocean was very choppy on that day. Valberto did not grow tired of explaining everything to us. Dulce understood a little of our language as a result of taking a German course. We ate in a restaurant which Valberto didn't like too much. A change of owners had diminished the restaurant's attractiveness. The dishes, however, especially the fried bananas, were prepared in a tasty way. Then we again had an after-lunch sleep until 3:00 p.m. After a good cup of coffee we felt refreshed for a big tour of the ocean along the beaches of the Florianópolis peninsula.

Valberto told us that the areas of the large bypass close to the beach in Florianópolis were washed round by the ocean 40 years ago. In the course of the last four decades gigantic areas were wrested from the sea for the traffic ways.

Florianópolis is the capital city of the federal state of Santa Catarina and at the same time the largest island of Santa Catarina. There is even a rumor that the length of its beaches is greater than the circumference of the island!/? That is quite conceivable because in addition to the ocean beaches there are also those of the *laguna* (lagoon). Florianópolis has 42 beaches, an international airport, diverse hotel chains, many restaurants and bars, and especially hospitable people. Asphalt-surfaced roads, vegetation-rich passages, sand-dunes, rivers, and streams, and many other things pass through the 51 kilometers long and 18 kilometers wide island. In the heart of the island lies a great lake, the *Lagoa da Conceição*, which was made famous many times in music and poetry and is still sung about today. Instead of modern development, Florianópolis has preserved a living (traditional) culture, customs, and traditions. Old spectacles, such as "*Boi-de Mamão*" and "*Pau-de-Fita*" are to be seen on the island. Craftwork also has a solid place on the island. Chiefly baskets, made from straw and willow, worth seeing and also worth buying, as well as pottery. Sundays there's a craft market at the *Praça XV de Novembro*. Also worth visiting are the many and diverse events in the center of Florianópolis. The city offers various tourist attractions: the fortress Anhatomirim, erected in 1739; Forte Sant Ana (now a weapons museum), built 1761; the Metropolitana Cathedral; the Hercilio Luz Bridge, one of the largest suspension bridges in the world; different museums, and much more.

(<http://www.santa-catarina.net>) also ( "<http://www.santa-catarina.net>" )

From the high-lying Jesuit Theological College we enjoyed a wonderful panoramic view of the island. We made the acquaintance of a man from Uruguay. He even offered me his mate pipe with which one slurps the hot tea extract known as *chimarrão* from a special container (a gourd). If one is offered the pipe and does not drink, that is regarded as impolite. Valberto couldn't believe his eyes when I didn't turn down this invitation. The man had a gap in his teeth at the bottom of his mouth. He could fit the pipe comfortably in there. Just about everything has its advantages and disadvantages. Helmut Stortz told us that the *chimarrão* must be so strong that when the extract is spit on a dog, it leaves a hairless spot on its coat.

More about the ocean. Fishermen were working on their boats and nets. There was a very cozy bar here made of planks in which anyone could stick news, messages, or addresses on the posts or the wooden walls. Very many well-known artists, actors, and other well-known personalities with status and name-recognition from all over the world had left their picture and autograph. The owner gave us a high-proof sugar cane schnapps. Martin then took a photograph of me and the landlord.

Then we visited a friend of Valberto, a Sacred Heart priest, who up until his retirement had been a professor at the university in Florianópolis. The way there, high on a mountain, was so enormously steep that from fear we got out. Valberto drove the first stretch utterly fearlessly alone with momentum. The very steep section was surely a kilometer long. Father/Professor Raulino Hilário Bussarelo (of Italian descent) looked after us well. The friendly gentleman invited us to a beer and cakes and pastries. We had a very interesting conversation. His ambition (life's dream) is to build a library

on his own plot of land. The foundations and the bottom slabs had already been poured some years before. Will he be able to realize his dream? The leave-taking was really cordial. Up there, Father Bussarelo (born 28 March 1922) is truly one step closer to the Good Lord. He occupies a large, roomy, grand house with a swimming pool on the grounds. The small, fascinating humming-birds, exotic plants, and a part of the primeval-forest-like mountain slope give his property an exceptional appeal. Three university students live at his place as renters. Anyone who doesn't absolutely have to be there should not go up or drive up the mountain. The descent from the mountain was managed only with good brakes and with the help of the Good Lord. There are impressions that one simply does not forget. After we had completed our day's program, following the evening meal, we went to sleep about 11:30 p.m.

### **Wednesday, 13 October 1999**

Before breakfast I read a verse from the Bible, or a prayer, or a lesson, just as it was recited each morning in my family. At 7:30 a.m. we traveled with Valberto to Brusque. There we visited the big, modern parish church. Valberto worked there four years as the pastor. A very beautiful, I think, also a modern church. The builder and architect was Gottfried Boehm from Cologne. Unfortunately, the church does not have good acoustics, as Valberto reported. We visited a large complex of buildings in a gigantic park, where spiritual exercises and other meetings of a Christian character will be held. He belongs to the Sacred Heart congregation. Valberto was the co-planner and responsible for the building phase; furthermore, for many years he was director of this institute. Valberto personally laid out the park and planted trees from the palm family and other trees and shrubs. We were very amazed at what Valberto had already achieved in his life for the Sacred Heart Order. Valberto met men and women with whom he had formerly worked, and greeted old parishioners who knew him in the city. The streets in the place were dirty, because the Duck Festival was being celebrated. We finally traveled to Azambuja, the so-called "Wonder Valley," where we visited a very beautiful pilgrimage church with a grotto right next to the church. The fresh spring "holy" water was collected in containers for the pilgrims to take with them, or also for drinking at the grotto. I also tasted the water and filled a bottle for the return trip. In front of the image of the Mother of God stood about 150 flamingo-

flowers (anthurium).

Settled by Germans, Italians, and Poles, Brusque became famous through its textile production, which drew dealers and investors from various regions of Brazil on account of good prices and the quality of the goods. In any case, it's worth a trip to Brusque as a tourist attraction.

**The city park Caixa d'Agua** The park is situated in the center of the city and provides by means of a cableway a panoramic view over the city. This connects the park, over a stretch of 578 meters, with the Botanical Garden. A mini-zoo can also be visited, and a training airplane from the Second World War.

**The Valley of Azambuja** A religious complex which lies 3 kilometers outside the city. The complex will be formed by a hospital, lodging possibilities, the cathedral, the seminary, the chapel, the grotto, and by a museum. The place of pilgrimage Nossa Senhora do Carvaggio will have a curative effect attributed to it. The feast in honor of the consecration will begin in August.

**Park of the Waterfalls** Situated 13 kilometers away from the center of the city is the Park of the Waterfalls which offers a wonderful view: the waterfalls are surrounded by untouched nature. The national "Duck Festival" started in 1986 serves visitors to the city of Brusque a typical dish (main course) of this region: "duck with red cabbage." As side-dishes to the duck dish there are mashed potatoes, kraut, and lots of beer. At this festival, along with lots of music and beer, there are also many products from the region to be seen. The festival takes place in the Maria Celina Vidotto Imhof events center with an area of 55,000 square meters.

**The Zoological and Botanical Garden** in Brusque with an area of 120,000 square meters accommodates 640 species of animals, including 73 reptiles, 82 mammals, and 485 kinds of birds. Many of the animals found here are indeed endangered and facing extinction. It is very pleasant to stroll through the forest, seeing the animals and the many kinds of trees and flowers. Especially interesting is the Amazonian department: here one finds all the vegetation of this province. Many bromeliads, orchids, and different animal species which are already facing extinction, such as: jacutinga, caxingueles, pacas, sabias, and macucos, which will have to be bred here again. (["http://www.santa-catarina.net"](http://www.santa-catarina.net))

Then we went on to see the Júlio Boing family, who had already visited us in Rosendahl-Osterwick. Pedro Boing had already arrived from Balneário Camburiú S.C. We were very warmly greeted. Seven years ago they had built a new house which contained wings for living, bathing, and sleeping. Júlio said that the old house had been built already ripe for demolition by the previous owner. He had a wonderful, coming-from-the-heart humor. The new, painted white house is built at an angle; quite a few of the rooms can be walked to by a covered passageway on the eaves side of the house. Zenir Boing, nee Kreuzsch, is a woman who can knuckle down to it, and she wouldn't be afraid to butcher an ox. She had eight children, of whom the youngest died as a small child. Her daughter Irma is a Sister in a Religious Order, and her son Renatus is a Sacred Heart Priest. Renatus was the first Boing, who after the immigration of their ancestors in the year 1862, sought contact with their original home and relatives in Bocholt, and again established ties with the broken family bonds. He studied in Rome and enjoyed being with his relatives in Bocholt during the semester breaks. On 5 July 1964 Renato celebrated his first Mass (the first Holy Mass of a new priest), surprise, surprise, with his relatives in Bocholt. The remaining children are married and gainfully employed.

In the large kitchen the long table was set. With their children, sons- and daughters-in-law, and three grandchildren, we were fifteen persons altogether. There was potato salad, a kind of mixed-up savory vegetables, spaetzle (a kind of noodles), rice, cauliflower, beans, carrots, juicy roast pork, roast beef in thin slices, and crisp fried chicken. After the main course, many large bowls were set out with the fruits of the country, which were sweet, juicy, and very delicious, from the pampering of the Brazilian sun. It was indeed a pleasure to consider for our consumption the wide variety of fruits, not all of



which were familiar to us.

Before the meal, first everyone prayed aloud, then Júlio prayed. He thanked God that we were his guests and asked Him to protect us during our stay in Brazil. After the meal many German songs were sung. The young farmer played the guitar at the same time. It was an experience to observe the hospitality and the family get together.

After the midday meal Júlio and Zenir showed us their second family source of income which they responsibly pursue near the farm. We suddenly stood in a bakery which was equipped with great consideration for neatness and tidiness. A large modern professional baker's oven was the eye-catcher in that room. On the walls were stuck shelves on which in rows and ranks stood very large labeled tins with ingredients ready for cookies. The flour was delivered, as we saw, in sacks.

Here in this abode for baking, exclusively cookies in the most varied decorative shapes and flavors were produced with joy by Júlio and Zenir for sale by the firm. Of course, they had a number of tins with finished cookies which, after our substantial midday meal, we had to try one after another on our full stomachs. The very good sales give evidence also of the very good quality.

Júlio showed us the palms of his hands and said, "Don't my hands look as though they belong to a pastor? That's the obvious advantage that the young people work on the farm and we work in the bakery." Zenir said, "When we've got our work done here and we feel like it, Júlio and I go for a walk."

With melancholy we said good-bye to the big lovable hospitable Boing family. Martin and I thought about whether we will see them again, a third time, in our life?

As we started our return trip to Brusque, Valberto said...no, it seemed more as though he was thinking out loud: "I don't know any man with such an upright character as Júlio has in him. I believe that he has not once been capable of a wicked thought. Júlio is an estimable man."

From Brusque we traveled to Gaspar. There we visited the St. Peter's Church built in the Gothic style. From the church one looks out over the valley and at the Itajai River, which accompanied us for a long stretch of our trip. It goes farther onto the Rio do Sul. We traveled through the festively decorated city Blumenau; only with great care were all the streets passable on account of the beer-drinking-and-singing groups of visitors. Were we in Munich, or in a place on another continent? *Oktoberfest* (October festival) was celebrated for three weeks in a gigantic festival hall, in many restaurants, and privately. We also visited the cathedral, at the place, which was designed and built by the same architect, as in Brusque, Gottfried Boehm from Cologne. In the windows, bows were displayed like net curtains. Behind the altar was a large, round, bordered-with-stones window image. The yellow to rose-colored little stones were fascinating. In Blumenau, too, we visited a businessman Mário Hellmann and his cousin Josefine Hellmann. Mário Hellmann speaks a classical High German, because indeed his almost daily business connections have their origin in Germany. He and his cousin, a single teacher living in retirement, are also very interested in research. Josefine intends to write a book about their home town Vargem do Cedro. Josefine also speaks a very good German. Valberto had planned a visit to the archives of Blumenau. Martin did not fail to establish contact and to speak about the Brazilian-related emigration research of our study group.

Founded and colonized in the year 1848 by German emigrants under the leadership of Dr. Hermann Blumenau, today Blumenau is regarded as THE symbol of German colonization in Brazil. Hermann Bruno Otto Blumenau was born on 26 December 1819 in Hasselfelde/Harz. He spent the first years of his life there, then, after preparation at the grammar school by Pastor Götting in Klein-Winningstedt, he went to visit a relative of the family, the highly respected Martino-Katharineum in Braunschweig. As the youngest of six children Hermann had a difficult position in the family, and his father, a respected senior forestry official (later forest councilor) in Hasselfelde, did not think all that much of him. Time and time again he let him sense mistrust in his ability, which injured his son, and caused him so long as his father lived to seek justification with his activities. Shortly before his *Abitur* (school-leaving examination at grammar school needed for entry to higher education), the father decided to take his son out of the school.

Nevertheless, Hermann was accepted for study at university by reason of first-rate results at school. Beforehand he completed an apothecary apprenticeship. In those days that was regarded as the best preparation for a subsequent study of chemistry. He began the apprenticeship in 1836 in Blankenburg and finished it in 1840 with the best references. Immediately after that Hermann Blumenau set off on his travels. On foot he traveled across Bohemia, Upper Austria, visited Salzburg, Gastein, climbed Alpine peaks, reaching Heiligenblut on the Großglockner. The second-largest festival in Brazil and the second-largest beer festival in the world, the *Oktoberfest* was already the biggest tourist event in Santa Catarina. After heavy flooding, the city of Blumenau was rejuvenated in 1984 by this festival and each year attracts thousands of tourists. During the day there are numerous events in the city, processions, and folklore presentations. The center of the city is filled by the sounds of the music of the bands of the visitors. In the evening the festival is found in the 5 pavilions of the PROEB with shows by German bands, national music, and rock shows. German cooking is likewise present with diverse typical dishes. In the numerous restaurants and stores there are dozens of souvenirs for sale, T-shirts, hats, beer mugs, all with typical symbols of the festival. The city of Blumenau today has a strong economy: in many different ways, and is constantly improving the largest textile production in Latin America, and the second largest in the world. Hering, Sulfabril, and Serpa's Planet are recognized brand names. Blumenau's infrastructure, and thus that of the entire region as well, is not only regarded as "typically German," but surprisingly also as "normal civilization" by visitors from Germany. Environmental protection, for example, is a high priority for the city governments of Blumenau and Pomerode and the resident businesses themselves invest a great deal for the protection of the environment and to preserve the natural landscape. The industry of Blumenau is one of the best developed of Santa Catarina and is made up primarily of furniture making, the furnishing of houses, and sports fashions. What is more, businesses stand in the foreground which contribute to the conservation of traditional building materials. The city government founded in partnership with private initiative the Conference Office, an enterprise for the organization of the exhibition of the metal and mechanical engineering industry, the textile industry, and medicine. The greatest foe of the city is the disastrous flooding which in 1983, 1984, and again in more recent years considerably devastated the city. "Oktoberfest" \_ The city is organizer of the largest German folk festival in Brazil, the Oktoberfest. It is the second largest festival of Brazil overall. It is found at the site PROEB. (["http://www.santa-catarina.net"](http://www.santa-catarina.net))

We arrived at the home of Valberto's sister Olinda in Rio do Sul at about 10:00 p.m. Her husband Vital Marchi is Italian. They were both glad to see us, but especially to see Valberto, their brother and brother-in-law. After the evening meal we conversed a little in Low German, then we went to bed. A night bird gave out a shrill, monotonous sound, lasting for hours, so that I couldn't sleep. In Valberto's room the housecat probably came in through the window ten times. He didn't want to give up the fresh air, however; in exchange, after all resistance attempts failed, he resigned himself to the unwanted feline visits.

#### **Thursday, 14 October 1999**

We slept until 8:00 a.m. then had breakfast. After the refreshment, we traveled in the city of Rio do Sul. First we looked at the large church which is simply wonderful. Bright colors which one comes across again and again here in Germany, beautiful pews, good smooth wood. In all churches one hears subdued, sensitive, soft music. Valberto and Martin still had a few questions for the pastor Father Thiago Heinzen, whose ancestors came from Hunsrück. Then we went through the city. Dealers from North-Brazil offered hammocks. Valberto haggled the price of a hammock from 35 down to 25 Reais. Martin and I agreed to the gift that was intended for our grandchildren. My two companions, Valberto

and Martin, still wanted to go visit someone. Valberto soon found the house. After we had climbed up the stairs to the first upper story, Valberto spoke with a woman, who told him that the gentleman would soon arrive. We sat down and waited. A large open door gave an unrestricted view of a beautiful private chapel. Then the gentleman for whom we'd been waiting came right around the corner of the corridor, with bare feet in sandals, wearing a colorful knitted vest, and with a large soft peaked cap (tilted) on his head. I thought the large ring on his hand did not go with his outfit. Martin and Valberto greeted him, and he asked right away, "Can I also speak Low German?" I sat down in a relaxed position. Then Martin said, "Yes, Hildegard, you're sitting opposite a Bishop." Right away then I assumed a demure posture. He is a big, imposing man of 72 years. The ancestors of Bishop Tito Buss came from Stadtlohn. He can speak Low German well. Before we started off on an exchange of ideas in Low German, Martin asked if he would give us the episcopal blessing. That he did solemnly in the private chapel. He also gave Martin copies of his genealogical notes on the Buss and Oenning families. Then he showed us the treatment room for his psychological therapy. I had to lie down on a couch, and he attached electrodes to my fingers and surrounded me with background music. It was quite an experience, when I consider that I was probably the only woman from Osterwick to have been situated in a horizontal posture in front of a Bishop. Had I known about it in advance, I would not have been so guileless and relaxed.

Then we started off on the way to Olinda, who had prepared the midday meal. There was rice, soufflé, roast ham, vegetables, and dessert, all very tasty. We said our good-byes, then we had to return 200 kilometers to Florianópolis, luckily on a very beautiful road. Still, we visited the town Santa Theresa. In the cemetery is buried the born-in-Coesfeld Carolina Dirksen, nee Haverkamp, great-grandmother of Valberto. Valberto found at the garbage dump one day her old gravestone with the well preserved epitaph, which he will safeguard for the family and return to its rightful place. Valberto was always making an effort to show us something special and to give us reports on informative things about the land and the people. In first gear, Valberto drove up an unmarked, very poor, and steep path. Only initiates could know about this path. I believe in our stomachs nothing was any longer in its usual place. We had doubts about the fitness of his car, but Valberto said the car, built according to the guidelines of the terrible road conditions in Brazil, could handle such a strenuous path. Oh, now the mountain is going ever higher. On the mountain-top we believed one could see to the end of the world. We again had the feeling that the Good Lord was very near.

Quiet, quiet. As we traveled back we could almost take hold of the clouds. I was very happy when we arrived at the bottom without harm. Further on, as already mentioned, the road was good. Shortly before Florianópolis Valberto filled up with gasoline. Not 500 meters farther a red light came on; there was a lack of water. Valberto stopped the car between two lanes. Clever, but also dangerous. There was a lack of coolant, a rubber seal was torn. A mechanic came and made a makeshift repair of the damage for 20 Reais. Martin had already discovered the cause for the security stop before the examination by the auto mechanic. In any case, towards 10:00 p.m. we arrived home very exhausted, Valberto especially was worn out. In the two days we had covered some 700 to 750 kilometers, of which half was over unstable, terrible, filled-with-potholes roads. In some places we drove over mere poorly-laid cobblestones which also had potholes. A conversation was almost impossible because of the traffic noise. It was almost embarrassing for us, what all Valberto did for us.

### **Friday, 15 October 1999**

After breakfast at 8:30 a.m. Valberto took his auto to the shop to have the temporary repair expertly remedied. Dulce did our laundry. We traveled with Valberto to the bank to get some currency exchanged. Two policemen stood at the door. Martin did not get through the security search gate because he had a small pocket-knife in his trousers pocket. After the handing over of the tiny pocket-knife to the policemen, who held onto the dangerous utensil until the conclusion of the bank visit, the way was clear for Martin. I had never previously seen such a large number of bank customers. Those

waiting their turn in front of the gigantic bank counter were plied with coffee vending-machines and television programs.

Finally, we went to the university, Valberto's office. We only got a rough look around at the university grounds. After the midday meal with Claudio and Rafael, rest was called for until 3:00 p.m. Martin and Valberto went to the diocese archives where they met some people with whom Martin had had contact through letters for many years. Among others who went to the meeting were Bishop Vito Schlickmann, whose ancestors came from Schöppingen, Aderbal Philippi, his wife Else who acted as interpreter, Evaldo Hemkemaier, and Valberto. Martin felt really good in the diocese archives. The cooperation and the great interest of the family researchers, historians, emigration researchers, and the authors of books, which dealt with the German emigration of the 19th Century to Brazil, was the reward for the years of work in the study group „Münsterland's Brazilian Emigrants“. Valberto had invited Martin to take part in his evening lecture on the emigration movements. Martin was enthusiastic about the style and manner in which Valberto arranged the sphere of his theme, and described it very vividly to his listeners.

I went shopping with Dulce in the afternoon and finally ironed our laundry. Dulce has three sons: the eldest, Ivan, studies and lives in Brusque, the middle one, Claudio, and the youngest, Rafael, study in Florianópolis and live with Dulce and Valberto. Claudio and Rafael were very friendly, open-minded, and attentive.

### **Saturday, 16 October 1999**

Today called for getting up early. At 7:00 a.m. we set off to Armazém. Father Sérgio Hemkemeier greeted us with a cup of coffee in his new parish office. At 10:00 a.m. the Mass for the Golden Wedding anniversary of the married couple Emilio Berkenbrock and his wife Nilsa, nee Michels, was to begin. The time came and we went to the church. The very beautiful, appealing church was completely, wonderfully decorated with flowers. White callas and yellow asters (Michaelmas daisies) with white veils decorated the pews. In the church everybody who could speak German, above all Low German, crowded around us. Also two priests greeted us warmly in German. Then came the ceremonial entry of the Golden couple with their children and grandchildren, and all the conversing church visitors were quiet. The choir sang songs with beautiful melodies. Five clergymen and one deacon celebrated the Mass. Four priests came from neighboring parishes and honored the Golden couple through their participation in the saying of the Golden Mass. A lector with a strong voice led us through the Golden Mass. His duty was of an extensive nature, different from how we know it; one could describe him as the director of the celebration of the Mass. Father Sérgio greeted the Golden couple and spoke briefly about their journey through life, in the Portuguese language, in High German, and at the conclusion in our wonderful Münsterland dialect. Then their children, relatives, and friends spoke. The two of us were specially greeted. We were called to the altar for us to introduce ourselves. You can understand how I felt, as in front of a filled church, I went up the steps to the altar and introduced myself to the people. Spontaneous applause from the church visitors lessened my inhibitions a little. Martin managed to stay relaxed, as though it was something completely normal. Father Sérgio translated everything that Martin said about his emigration research. After the conclusion of the speech by Martin, we were again given a great deal of applause. I was very happy when we could again take our places in our pew. Father Höper (his forefathers came from Südlohn-Oeding), about 42 years old, took the microphone and sang a very melodious song. The text was suited to the life of the Golden couple Emilio and Nilsa Berkenbrock. The refrain was sung by all of the church visitors. From emotion, we couldn't hold back our tears. Next year Father Höper will bring out a CD. Martin told him after the Mass that with his singing Heaven had opened and the Heavenly Hosts as a result could take part in the Golden Wedding. Three very prettily-dressed granddaughters brought to the Golden couple gold rings and a gold bouquet, then came the children with gifts. The Golden groom lost his gold ring, as he later told us, soon after the Mass. He remarked about that, that it would have been worse, if he'd lost his Nilsa. The witnesses (wedding attendants) and us, all the married couples

in the Golden Mass, had to shake hands, and we received once again the blessing of our marriage bond. A choir from Vargem do Cedro (world capital of the Order), uniformly dressed, accompanied the Golden Mass with their beautiful singing. After the Mass, many photos were taken in front of the altar; it was solemn and yet very relaxed. The soloist Father Höper showed Martin into a room of the church after the conclusion of the Golden Mass, and pointed his upright thumbs at him. He wanted to make clear to Martin that the course of the Golden Mass had gone fantastically well.

The Mass was over, after two hours, at 12:00 noon. With Júlio Boing and his wife we went to the community house. There were over 500 guests present. Three large tables were laden with salads, vegetables, and bean salads. A cook tirelessly sliced thin the thick roast beef and ham. Everything was very tasty. After the meal, Father Höper gathered all those of German origin around him, and then they sang German songs with such fervor as I had never before witnessed. Once it was said, "And when he dies, carry him to the cemetery and sing lustily: The Fellow's Thirsty." When the Brazilians of German origin sing German songs, they all stand up, to do honor to their Germanness.

We sat by German-speaking guests with whom Martin had already had contact through letters. Then a videotape of Mr. and Mrs. Berkenbrock was played. It lasted a good one-and-a-half hours until all the children with their partners, brothers and sisters with partners, and relatives had their say on the tape. After the video about the life's journey of the married couple Emilio and Nilsa Berkenbrock, the large, delicious Golden Wedding Anniversary cake was cut and coffee served. At 4:00 p.m. Valberto picked us up as arranged at the celebration hall. After saying our good-byes to the ones we'd been speaking to at the party and to the Golden couple, we got ready for the trip to São Bonifácio. No one in Osterwick can imagine that there exists such a nearly impassable road. We traveled some 60 kilometers or even more through deep potholes, mud and sludge. It just wouldn't end. I was totally worn out. Valberto was however a good driver who mastered with daring and bravery all the situations that appeared difficult to me. The relatives of Valberto, our hosts, who received us with great friendliness, were already waiting for us. Loreno and Roseli Philippi served us coffee and bread. That revived our spirits. At 7:00 p.m. the second church service in one day for us was held in São Bonifácio. Dona Hilda, 72 years old, a cousin of Valberto, used to go with bare feet in bath slippers in wet, cold weather to Mass. She sat next to me in the church. There were hymns sung whose melodies we knew. After the Mass--oh, no, not that--it was said again, Valberto, Martin and Hildegard Holz had to be introduced to the parish. Also, again at the altar! After the introduction, Martin spoke briefly from the altar about emigration research, which was to be gone into in greater detail afterwards in the community building. The mayor had invited us, along with all interested citizens of the community who wished to know where their ancestors had come from, to the community building after the service. In the community building interested citizens were already waiting for us. Two children's dance groups in traditional costumes were ready to honor us with their dances. Again there was a table for the host and honored guests. Martin, Valberto, the mayor, and the pastor sat down. First the mayor greeted us and thanked us for having come to them from the ancestral homeland Germany. Then Valberto spoke about emigration movements in general, about the immigration of Hunsrücker in the year 1828/29 and the immigration of Münsterlanders in the years around 1860. He also spoke about those led by Father Wilhelm Roer (born 29 September 1822, Münster, died 8 October 1891, Porto Alegre), with the Brazilian government's approval, in a migration of Münsterland's immigrants in order to be settled down finally on fertile soil. Martin explained in detail the way of thinking and purpose of the Münsterland emigration research. He was glad that he had found in Brazil people who were pursuing the same goal. Valberto interpreted Martin's remarks. The people were very enthusiastic and asked him a lot of questions, which for the most part he was able to answer. Loreno sat next to me and to my delight translated the Portuguese passages of the speakers. The children's dance groups in their beautiful traditional costumes gave a good varied presentation of rehearsed German folk dances. The dance interlude was rewarded with great applause. The mayor gave Martin a picture of the town of São Bonifácio, and the children's dance group gave me, "*Senhora Hildegard*," a painted plate. The (female) leader of the children's dance group and the children wanted to take a group photo together with Martin and me. Each child upon departing held out a hand quite heartily and wanted to be squeezed by us. The sparkling children's eyes we'll never forget. After the leave-taking of the initiators, the mayor, who at the

same time was the doctor of the town, the deputy mayor, the singer Raulino Backes with guitar, the pastor of the town, and others, we Valberto, Martin, and I very happily went back home with Dona Hilda Philippi, nee Dirksen, and Loreno Philippi.

Roseli had stayed at home, and had prepared for us a delicious, substantial meal. The shared meal slowed down the flow of words a little, a sign that everything tasted good. The 72-year-old Dona Hilda, a cousin of Valberto, not only spoke wonderful Low German, but she was also a living history book. Among other things, Hilda told that a pastor one time was preaching a long and boring sermon, when an impatient church-goer yelled, "Gentlemen, I smell fire!" and the church was empty in no time. We saw a young rider; at that moment she said spontaneously, „Oh, it's not that I was interested in the rider, but I really liked the horse“. In addition, she told the following: the family of her grandparents never had an unpleasant contact with the Indians in the primeval forest territory. Naturally, her grandfather was intent on expanding his boundary, when possible, imperceptibly without a great fuss into the primeval forest. Following her grandfather's "boundary corrections," the Indians pointed out where the actual intrusion into their hereditary territory was with lianas pulled tight across the path or other set-up obstacles. When her grandfather set up traps outside of his property bounds, he most often found only the fur of an already-gone animal in the closed trap. At some time her grandfather recognized the signs of the always invisible Indians and respected their wish for the inviolableness of their boundaries. After that, the vicinity was a peaceful place. Earlier, Hilda had always had a horse and a little wagon which was her means of locomotion to reach the village of São Bonifácio 6 kilometers away. For over 20 years she played the harmonium in the church. The opinion of Dona Hilda was often heard, and esteemed, in the village. In the unoccupied parental Philippi house 6 kilometers away, Hilda looked after the domestic animals every day. One day when no automobile was at her disposal, she went the 12 kilometers, there and back, on foot, to care for her animals. Her son Loreno and daughter-in-law Roseli didn't want to tolerate any more that his mother was sleeping alone in the lonely house. The 72-year-old Dona Hilda stayed at my side and spoke very interestingly in the Low German language of the by-gone times.

We told her about the countless bird's nests which we saw during our tour of the widening stream, and what an unfamiliar, impressive appearance they presented.

Valberto had told us that the employees of the power station very often out of precaution have to destroy the horizontally-positioned current-carrying "works of art" of *Lehmhänschen*<sup>(1)</sup> birds, because they can trigger short-circuits in the power grid.

Hilda Philippi told us the following story about the *Lehmhänschen*:

"The *Lehmhänschen* had caught his life's-partner *in flagranti* (in the act) in connection with an infidelity with a creature of the same species. *Hänschen* felt inconsolable about the disloyalty of his wife and very wounded in his bird's honor. Instead of forgiving, his desire for revenge grew, and he could no longer suppress it. When his disloyal wife had settled down for a night's rest in their shared clay dwelling, *Hänschen* sneaked out to put his plan for revenge into practice. In all due haste he sealed up the entrance with saliva and clay. The spurned one now, burdened with the knowledge of having been unfaithful, had to look forward to her demise from lack of food."

People in Brazil commonly say of the little "master builders" of the feathered variety, the *Lehmhänschen*, that they observe strict Christian principles, and on Sunday, the 7th day of the week, they don't do any work.

The entrance hole will generally open contrary to the side exposed to weather so that the rain cannot get into their dwelling. Meteorologists and settlers observe these signs of the *Lehmhänschen* and, if applicable, are guided by them in their undertakings.

Hilda and I visited her daughter, who occupies a beautiful house with her family half a street away. She said that she was ashamed to speak only Low German. Her son Loreno, an electrician, 50 years old, and his wife Roseli, a teacher in the village, parents of six children, made an effort to provide us with delicious food and drinks and to communicate to us the feeling that we belonged with them.

Loreno worked for five years in Vienna, where he spoke flawless German. After a thorough discus-

sion about God and the world and the events of the eventful day, we went to sleep.

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<sup>1</sup> The *Erdhannes* ["earth (soil) Johnny"], *João (John) de Barro*, also called *Lehmhänschen* ["clay little John"] belongs to the family of "*Furnariden* - oven-builder": *Furnarius rufus*. Amongst them, the best known is the *Furnarius rufus badius* living in Southern and Central-Brazil. In the vernacular it is known as "*Forneiro* - oven builder," "*Barreiro* - earth (or soil) worker, laborer," "*Amassa-barro* - soil kneader," "*Maria-de-barro* - mud Marie," or also "*Oleiro* - potter." Usually he's earth-colored, his neck is somewhat whitish, and his tail reddish or also brown. He is an insect-eater, but also eats other small beetles. He builds his nest or his little house from mud or clay, which he forms in the correct or expected shape with his beak and feet. These small houses can be up to 30 centimeters [11.82 inches] in diameter, and usually they are up to 25 centimeters [9.85 inches] high; they have a rounded form and consist of two parts, the entrance or anteroom and an inner room which will be converted into a nest. This second room is divided from the first by a sloping porch which serves as protection against the invasion of enemies, especially against the small-bird eaters which can invade the outer hole. The complete small "house" has on average a weight of between 3 and 5 kilograms [6.6 to 11 pounds]. Sometimes the new dwellings are built over the old ones so that there are complete stories. The paired birds usually build a nest in 4 to 7 days. The bird is especially well-known and popular with bird-lovers through its cheerful and shrill song in the Brazilian countryside. Mr. Lucas Borgert from Brazil generously gave me the above information on the *Lehmhänschen*.

### **Sunday, 17 October 1999**

After breakfast, we first visited the museum of the town of São Bonifácio. The head of the museum, Mrs. Dilma Kock Exterkötter, was quite positive with regard to the research project of Martin and his co-researchers in Germany. She promised to help if an opportunity arose. Then came the visit to the cemetery. The inscriptions on the gravestones belong to the history of a town and thus have a great meaningfulness. Martin found many death dates of colonists, who were born in Münsterland and who, coming from Theresópolis, settled down in São Bonifácio in the 19th Century.

At 12:00 noon we were invited to a midday meal in a restaurant outside of the village by the mayor Dr. Dimas Espindola. Hilda and Loreno Philippi also came along. We could choose freely: fish, chicken, beef, noodles, potatoes, tomatoes, salads, and always capes or beans. These were cooked very dry; it is very similar to mashed potatoes at home. For dessert there was pudding and rice with cinnamon. Each one embraced us upon leave-taking and thanked us for our visit. It had been an honor for them to meet us and to get to know us better. Now, another thought on the estimation of the Philippi family, by whom we were warmly accepted. They were quite simply, lovely, from-the-heart nice people. We will never forget the hospitality of the Philippi family. We cannot understand how they made such a great effort for actual strangers; that they were thankful and happy that we were their guests.

After the farewell of the Philippi family, it was back again to the already described path of torture. For the car and the three of us, about 50 kilometers of a terrible stretch of road without any interruption lay in front of us. The first stop we made was at the home of the over 90-year-old Uncle Gustavo Dirksen. He, his daughter Tabita, and son-in-law Raulino Backes were very pleased by our brief visit. The son-in-law had appeared the evening before as a singer with his guitar at the mayor's reception. An untamed wild stream coursed its way through the large Dirksen / Backes property. It had in the recent past indeed by means of its often high water caused great damage to and in the residential buildings. To regulate the water volume for the purpose of the greatest possible damage control, Raulino Backes had done considerable dredge work on the stream bed. Raulino Backes is a versatile man. Besides his guitar playing and his singing, we even got to know his artistic side; we saw his naturalistic painted picture in São Bonifácio and the painting of the teaching of bee-keeping in Florianópolis. Time pushed on and we had to take our leave.

The next stop was at the family of Celestino Dirksen, a nephew of Valberto. The self-employed joiner (cabinet-maker) had prepared the windows and doors for Valberto's new house. The sister-in-law of Valberto and mother of Celestino told about a dangerous situation by which the whole family was moved to a fear of death. Not at all a long time before, a storm had raged frightfully and broke over

the electricity poles near the house. The power lines lying on the ground and on the fencing had kindled in the darkness a firework display around the residential estate. The complete fish population of a nearby large pond was exterminated by the electric shock. All the family members hoped that the inferno would not spread to the house. As quickly and violently as the fiery rain had come, it also disappeared again. The next morning one saw the large tracks of the fire right next to the destroyed electric lines. After a lively conversation and a cup of coffee with cookies, we had to take our leave again. After a long travel time, Valberto stopped at the residence of Simon Schmöller close to the town of Rio São João. Without leaving the car, we exchanged a few words with Simon Schmöller, of course in Low German, and got to know the married couple Helmut and Marly Stortz, who were just about to say good-bye to Simon, following a visit at his home. We would like to get to know all three better some day. Again there was a farewell, and the last stretch of road to cover. A long piece of the way went through real primeval forest. The treetops merged together over the desolate defile and changed the daylight into a mystical darkness. Morning and evenings, there in the forests, the howling monkeys cry out, especially when the weather changes. The colonists lived with nature and were often guided by the signs of the animal world. At some time or other, we managed the last nasty stretch of 2 1/2 kilometers. Suddenly to our great surprise a simply beautiful valley opened up before us. Here was located Valberto's parents' home. Valberto described it as "my Bethany." He enjoyed it, when he could regain his strength for a few days in the house of his sister and his brother-in-law, Albertina and José Schneider, when his work and dedication as a professor at the university of Florianópolis demanded he take a rest break. The site on which the house stands, with the whole milieu, is truly a piece of paradise. Without doubt through the generations it cost a very great amount of sweat to give this impression. We were warmly greeted by the married couple Albertina and José Schneider. Albertina said we should feel as if we were at home.

Now I would like to say something about my assessment of the colonists and their work. The people lived there quite modestly and contentedly. What they needed for daily life was worked for and harvested from farming. Because the temperature even in winter only very seldom reached the frost line, nature allowed for three rotations of crops. The Schneiders predominately plant tobacco. The care and maintenance up till the harvest is arduous work. The tobacco will be processed in special drying sheds before being sent off. Forestry, subsidized by the State, is also a source of income at the Schneider's. The land will be worked on by two draft oxen. Oxen are very strong and calm with the pulling of a plow; horses on the other hand are not suitable for this hard work. The pasture land and the farmland are on a mountain slope and on a plateau. They keep a cow, so they can have milk, and hogs for their domestic requirements. Two large fish ponds guarantee a good source of income through the sale of fish ready for slaughtering. There's television by means of a giant satellite dish. Propane gas was also available, but Albertina cooked on an old charcoal stove, because it tasted better, she said. There is no telephone in the house, no newspaper, and no mail which will be brought to the residence. Adam and Eve also did not have these means of communication in Paradise. If one never had these aids, one would also not miss them so much as we did. The happy hens run around free, laying their eggs there anywhere they please. José is in an Easter mood each day; he has to look for eggs, time and time again, because the hens haven't become accustomed to an egg-laying routine. Meanwhile, they brood, too, in a fork of the large fig tree. Then the Schneiders make provisions and stretch a big safety blanket under the brood area so that the chicks can tumble around there after hatching without being harmed. Valberto, with his father, planted these mammoth fig trees about 53 years ago. On the trees grew cactus, bromeliads, veil plants, and many other unknown to me exotic plants. Many impressions of the complete splendor of the flowers one can not describe at all; nature there is so wonderful and diverse. A tame toucan,<sup>(2)</sup> which as a young bird had received help from the Schneider family, belonged to the family and was always a guest at mealtime. The tiny iridescent humming-birds are welcome, wonderful creatures of God. Martin also saw a skunk slip through a section of the barn. When it is in distress and uses the stink gland as a weapon, one cannot enter the place where the event occurred for many weeks on account of the nasty stench. A circa 30 centimeter long lizard darted across the path into the bushes. Nature and the animal world for the European in Brazil offer a completely different way of looking at things and impart other impressions than in Ger-



many and the bordering countries.

Valberto invited me to go on the mountain slope with him to a group of pineapple bushes that he had planted many years ago. The gradient which he apparently strode up with ease demanded a really great deal of strength from me.

Albertina turned sixty-five years old on 21 October 1999. José is 63 years old. Marked by the heavy decades-long work, one could surely have estimated them as older. The married couple Albertina and José Schneider are lovable, trusting-in-God, contented people. José told a lot about the animals living in the wild and nature. At night the frogs in the ponds gave a sonorous evening concert. Only habit for the locals or great tiredness on the part of the guests permitted a night's sleep. Some of the great, magnificent specimens came up as far as the house or up to the lawn. They sat motionless and gave the impression that they were valuable clay figures.

<sup>2</sup> Living in South and Central America, nesting in treetops, a large, generally gorgeously many-colored bird with a very large shining colorful beak. The *Pfefferfresser* [toucan, "pepper mouth"].

### Monday, 18 October 1999

Again along the Indian path to Rio São João. We visited, in the morning, churches and cemeteries. Finally we were at the home of the family of Helmut and Marly Stortz. Their beautiful little house was on a slope. The house and garden were adorned with orchids and flowers of all kinds. They would have liked for us to have been their guests for at least one day. The Stortz family with their grown children speak very good German. In their circle of acquaintances Low German will also be spoken. The tidings that German vacationers were in the country got spread around like wildfire. Everyone was happy to see Germans and to speak to them.

For the midday meal we drove back to Albertina; there was plenty of everything. She said, "I always prepare good food, so that one can enjoy it each day. In agriculture, also, one must do a very great amount of hard work." Two sons manage the farm. One is still single; the other has a young, pretty wife. They're building a new home beside the parents' house. The young wife works everyday in the field with her husband and helps out where necessary. It's good, also, that the young people can resign themselves well and feel good, in isolation, with the hard agricultural work.

In the afternoon we were in Rio Gabiroba, invited to the home of a brother of Valberto, the sawmill operator Raimundo Dirksen, his wife Maria, nee Schmöller (whose family stems from Horstmar or Metelen), and the rest of the family. A large table with coffee and cakes was prepared, and a great deal of talking went on in Low German. Here, especially at breakfast and for coffee and cakes, there is "*Roske*". It is a very light, snow-white bread, which is baked from manioc<sup>(3)</sup> (cassava) flour, and with sour cream, honey, or syrup tastes very good. Still other acquaintances, whom Raimundo had invited, arrived as well. One didn't know whom he should listen to. Many questions were fired at us. Raimundo's son Egon Dirksen conversed very intensively, of course in flawless German, with Martin. He was very eager to learn really a lot about the land of origin, Germany. He is a subscriber to two German-language newspapers the *Familienkalender (Jahrbuch der Familie)* and the *Sankt-Paulusblatt* ["Family Calendar (Yearbook of the Family)" and "Saint-Paul Paper"]. He gave a copy to Martin. Naturally, after the *Kaffeeklatsch* (coffeeklatsch, get-together for talking, with coffee served) it was off again to the church and the cemetery. Martin checked the dates on the gravestones against his documents. Simon Schmöller, brother of the above-mentioned Maria, is a man of about 70 years. He had worked in the quarry. He had also lined the graves (with brick or stone) in the cemetery. When someone died, it had to be handled quickly. Within 24 hours after the death the burial had to take place. His uncle wanted very much to be buried above his wife who had died 21 years before. Simon removed the large granite slab from on top, but the grave was not deep enough. They lifted out the coffin of the aunt, and as it stood up there, they said: "Now, look how it is inside." The aunt was still very easy to recognize. The dress, the hair, the flowers, everything was still well-preserved. There was probably no water and little oxygen that reached the grave. With his description a shiver ran up my

spine. Simon then showed us a grotto which he had built from pebbles of different sizes. Simon is a very respected man who proverbially knows all the ropes. Helmut Stortz confirmed to us later that Simon is a completely dependable and upright man.

Back again to Albertina's, and we slept the last night on that beautiful little area of earth. We drove again through a piece of the primeval forest. Valberto always stops there, so that one can sense the profound silence of unspoiled nature, and see the different trees and creepers, and hear the various kinds of birds sing. After the evening meal we still spoke about the day's experiences before we went to sleep.

<sup>3</sup> Manioc (belonging to the spurge family), an important source of nutrition in the Tropics, Africa, South America, and the West Indies, is a growing shrub and from its tubers is extracted a cornstarch (potato substitute).

## **Tuesday, 19 October 1999**

At 8:45 a.m. we bade farewell to the paradise in the primeval forest and to our friendly hosts, Albertina and José. Both kindly invited us to come back again. With glorious blue skies we traveled one last time on the road through the primeval forest. At 10:00 a.m. we had a reception by Mayor Norvaldo Maas in São Martinho, a handsome, friendly man. Coffee was brought immediately by the secretary. With the deputy mayor, José Schotten, we ate our midday meal in a restaurant. Martin could even tell him about his Münsterland ancestors. It was an honor for us to be received so formally by the community. Beforehand we had visited the museum and church in São Martinho. The church is dedicated to Christ the King and the chapel to St. Martin. Very near was the cemetery. I must tell something else about the museum visit: Valberto, who years ago also participated in the building of the museum, explained to us all the utensils and old tools and the other things which were to be observed there. In the upper story, I saw how Martin, completely dismayed, stood in front of a display case and shook his head. He came to me and said, "Hildegard, there is without a doubt another man in the world who has the same handwriting as me. I find the characteristics of my handwriting on the description in the display case." He was understandably very agitated. Then he went to the display case again in order to read through the text, and determined with great relief that it actually was his handwriting. In 1995 Martin had sent a genealogical report on the ancestors of the Effting family, in Vargem do Cedro S.C., whose ancestral families came from Schöppingen and Legden, and one of those families in 1860 had secretly immigrated to Brazil. Martin had found again the requisites of the ancestral houses with their descriptions in the museum of the community of São Martinho. There are coincidences in life which often one cannot understand or describe, or to be precise are difficult to explain.

We had an indescribably beautiful view. Below us the Capivary Valley and the Capivary River, a little river with completely clear water and many thick and small erratic blocks (driftblocks), which can develop with extreme sediment in an unpredictable river.

From São Martinho we traveled through São Luiz to Vargem do Cedro. In São Luiz we visited the married couple Emilio and Nilsa Berkenbrock and also the place where Emilio's sister, Albertina Berkenbrock (born on 11 April 1919) was murdered on 15 June 1931. The 12-year-old Albertina had resisted her killer with all her strength up till her violent death in order to protect her virginity. The parents of Emilio and Albertina were Heinrich Berkenbrock and Josephine, nee Boeing, who as colonists worked for the support of their family in agricultural and pastoral farming. In memory of the murdered Albertina, at first a cross of stone was put up at the place of her death, and later a memorial chapel was built. The votive gifts in the chapel give witness to a great veneration by the Catholic-faithful who travel there from far and wide. Organized groups come in buses to venerate the murdered martyr and to pray in the chapel. Father Heinrich Sebastian Rademacher, born in Kleve on the Niederrhein (lower Rhine) on 18 May 1896, looked upon it as his most urgent task to give international standing to the spreading of Christian teachings. He was an enthusiastic young priest who first began his pastoral duties in Rio Fortuna S.C., up until 1927. After his appointment as pastor of the parishes of Taquaral, Ubatuba on the ocean S.P., Veadinho do Pôrto C.P. in the interior of the country, he had

worked in this community with great devotion for more than 40 years. The missionary work among the Brazilian native inhabitants was for him a special passion. This clergyman, Father Heinrich Sebastian Rademacher,<sup>(4)</sup> in 1932, wrote the 22-page true history of the murdered Albertina Berkenbrock with the title “The Heroic Maiden of Vargem do Cedro” and the subtitle “A True Occurrence” in his book “Under God's Sky” (pages 25 to 47), issued in 1933. Through the secular and religious press the tragic death of Albertina Berkenbrock, whose ancestor was born on 5 September 1815, in Darfeld in Münsterland, was made known in Brazil and Germany. It is yet to mention that the Black Maneco Palhoca, who was having an affair with a mulatto and had three children, was convicted as the killer of Albertina. He was a farmhand with the family of Colonist Heinrich Berkenbrock and lived only about 30 meters away from the farmstead in a hut. The murderer Maneco Palhoca was sentenced to 30 years imprisonment. After seven years of custody he died in prison.

Because the Brazilians of German origin during the First as well as the Second World War were exposed to repression by the Brazilian government, and the German language, customs, and the cultivation of cultural life was stopped with force and drastic punishment, Father Heinrich Sebastian Rademacher did not have the opportunity to make known to a wider readership in Brazil and Germany his history about the murdered Albertina Berkenbrock. Not until five years after the Second World War was the time ripe for the publication. Efforts are already underway and petitions for examination in the process for the beatification of the murdered Albertina.

At 3:00 p.m. we were invited to a senior afternoon in Vargem do Cedro. Before the city limits there's a big shield put up over the road with the inscription “Vargem do Cedro, World Capital of Religious Orders.” If this statement is justified, there is no other place in the world which has produced a greater number of priests and religious. Tabita Effting Feuser waited for us with a large group of women who meet each Tuesday and do crafts for a good cause. Everybody greeted me with a hug and, as is usual in Brazil, three little kisses. The husbands of the women pass the time playing cards. For us, a special table was set; I sat between two of the (old) ladies, who were present, which pleased them very much. Martin asked each woman, along with the greeting, about her surname and birth name. He could tell almost every woman something about her ancestors and the place of origin in Münsterland. The pastor also came to the welcoming and the shared coffee drinking. Later he showed us the church and the parish house. A really dynamic man, this Father Renato José Rohr. He's building a museum for the community and has already gathered so much from the residents of Vargem do Cedro that he can fill his museum, after its completion, with rarities and display items.

We then traveled to Maria Feuser's, nee Berkenbrock (she is a sister of the murdered Albertina). Maria married Sebastião Feuser, a brother-in-law of Tabita Effting Feuser. Her river house is done up like a fairy-tale park; a stream flows through a part of the house. She fed the fat carp by hand. They bake cookies by machine in a well-equipped bakery for customers from the region, but non-stop, and as she said, they have plenty to do. Then it was again 10 kilometers around the mountain to São Martinho. There Valberto asked Father Johann Höper to take us to Armazém to Father Sérgio Hemke-meier. We said good-bye to Valberto until Tuesday of the next week. It was really inconvenient for the busy Father Johann, but still he took us to Father Sérgio's. We certainly worried that it might be our last trip. Where only 40 kilometers per hour was permitted, Father Johann drove 80. He indeed knew the roads, is right at home there and is often on his way, but both of us were glad, as we were able to get out unscathed in front of the new parish building in Armazém. Father Sérgio was still occupied with pastoral duties. A neighbor and friend of his, Heinrich Michels, entertained us. Later we got to know and appreciate Father Johann better. He was often at the parish house of Father Sérgio. The housekeeper Elise is a totally nice and considerate person, but she certainly spoke no German. With “hands and feet,” with gestures and eye contact, we made ourselves understood to Elise very well. We got a beautiful room with two beds and its own bath. The building was constructed with the newest state-of-the-art home-building technology. Everything is tiled, there is an air-conditioning system, and everything is very grand and spacious and well thought-out. A very beautiful private chapel was put on the ground floor. Father Sérgio came back from Laguna going on 9:00 p.m. and greeted us warmly. He brought a tasty dish with seafood. At 11:00 p.m. we went to sleep. We were plea-

sed to have a good bed. Today we had very beautiful weather, it was a proper sunny spring day.

<sup>4</sup> On October 5, 1921, he took his first vow in Fünfbrunn-Luxenburg. He was ordained a priest in Taubaté (São Paulo) on October 5, 1925. He left the Sacred Heart Order in 1930 and became a secular priest. He worked among other places in Rio Grande do Sul. In Itapeirica da Serra (São Paulo) he was active as a secular priest up until his death. The Jesuit priest Alvin Bertoldo Braun, in 1954, also edited a booklet with the title "*Vida da Serva de Deus Albertina Berkenbrock.*" ["Life of the Servant of God Albertina Berkenbrock"]

### **Wednesday, 20 October 1999**

We slept well. Breakfast was at 8:00 a.m.; everything was delicious. Father Johann, who had brought us here yesterday, came and had breakfast with us. Father Sérgio still had to give confirmation instructions. The trip to the mountain range was supposed to be at 10:00 a.m. I was permitted to call Germany, heard Martina's voice on the answering machine, and then spoke with Sabina. It did me good to hear the voices of my children.

In São Ludgero we saw a modern large, well-lit church. Father Sérgio and Martin went in the parish building. We wanted to stop there once more, later, on the way back. We drove farther in the mountain range to Rio do Rastro, 1460 meters high. Over zigzag mountain roads the way led up. Elise, the housekeeper, a very nice, likable person, went with us. Father Sérgio wished to present her a beautiful day, because she is always so friendly to his guests and always said the right thing. We went even higher; unfortunately, we couldn't see anything on account of the presence of fog. There is a souvenir stand there with lively music. Martin danced with Elise. Father Sérgio took a photo of them. We went about two kilometers farther to partake of the midday meal. One could eat, as much as one wanted, until losing interest, thick steaks, deliciously cooked on an open fire, with beer and Cola. Father Sérgio paid a total of 25 Reais for the food and drinks.

Then it was back to the earlier foggy lookout point. The veil of mist now had completely disappeared, and we had a marvelous view over the valley. How beautiful then is God's world! I went to the car to get my purse. Oh, no, I saw my purse was no longer on the backseat of the car, and Elise's also was not there. At the moment my legs were as though paralyzed. At first, we were all frightfully shocked, then all at once Father Sérgio said, "Hildegard, you were in the wrong car." In our car, thanks be to God, all the purses were still in their place. The circulation in my legs returned to normal again. After that we all laughed heartily about my suspicion of theft. What a circumstance it would have been, if we had been left standing there without identity cards, means of payment, and our personal records—for the time being impoverished. Then it was down the mountain again slowly. We made another stop in São Ludgero. Now, Pastor Lückmann was at home; he was pleased by Martin's information about his ancestors. Father Sérgio's niece is active next door in the sister house as a sister of the Order of Divine Providence. The motherhouse is in Münster. When the sisters heard of our arrival, a coffee table was set up immediately with delicious pastries. The eldest nun, whose ancestors stem from Hunsrück, was 87 years old. The ancestors of another (religious) sister, born Röttger, emigrated to Brazil in 1860 from the place of origin Asbeck. We laughed ever so much at stories which the elderly sister told. Of course, my supposedly stolen purse was also laughed about. We laughed until we cried. The sisters didn't want to let us go at all. Sister Agnes asked in Low German, whether we, before we left, wanted to pour off water (do wee-wees). The two of us almost went in our pants we had to laugh so much. Martin received from Pastor Lückmann the history of the town of São Ludgero in the German language; he was permitted to photocopy it and is happy about that. Martin was supposed to carry greetings to Sister Sabine in the Münster motherhouse.

The next stop was Braço do Norte. The widow Maria Schlickmann Brüning from Braço do Norte, an aunt of Mrs. Frey-Brüning in Switzerland, gave Martin interesting papers in three cardboard boxes. Her husband Daniel Brüning was mayor of Braço do Norte and wanted to write a book about the town. He died before he could complete his plan. A street named after him gives evidence of a committed, respected mayor. Next we made a stop at the church. Father Sérgio's nephew is priest there and pa-

rish administrator. He told us that in addition to his parish church he has pastoral duties at 25 chapels. In two areas there is also school teaching. He is a friendly, handsome man. He showed us the church. It has an enormous high wooden ceiling of squares. In each, an animal is depicted. I think it's supposed to be a symbol of Noah's Ark. In the chancel one finds a large cross. On the left side are five angels dressed in pink, on the right side five angels dressed in light blue. Such is the color diversity in Brazil. Each month the pulpit is fitted and decorated with a different figure of a saint. Today the Black Madonna of Brazil stood there. Today was a full, beautiful spring day. At 5:30 p.m. we were home again at Armazém. Father Sérgio was fond of telling clean jokes. He asked us the difference between *wunderbar* (wonderful, amazing; strange, odd) and *sonderbar* (strange, odd). As we could not answer this question, he said, "Elias drove a fiery chariot through the sky: that was 'wunderbar' (amazing). That in doing so he didn't burn his behind was 'sonderbar' (strange)." He always had a pleasant joke ready.

Elise had never been in the mountains. I believe that she came from a not-wealthy family and was happy to have a responsible position as housekeeper for Father Sérgio. She looked after Father Sérgio as a father and never took an afternoon off. Not that she had to work incessantly, but she was simply there when Father Sérgio needed her help. I met a woman who helped Elise to keep clean the big house with the well-groomed vegetable garden.

Around 8:00 p.m. we ate the rest of yesterday's seafood dish. Father Sérgio had forgot that he was supposed to say a Mass. It upset him particularly that his "lambs" had to wait over 10 minutes for their pastor. Sérgio said to us, "You ought to know that a priest never arrives too late. The Mass first begins when the celebrant walks up to the altar." We attended the Mass also, of course late, in order to receive the final blessing.

Father Sérgio still had to go to the Rotary Club. The questions about "where from" are always present with the Brazilians of German origin, even in this meeting. Afterwards, it was held against him that he had not taken Martin there with him, since everybody had looked forward to Martin's appearance. We read a little in our room. About 10:00 p.m. Father Sérgio returned. He even came in the room (I was already in bed) and told us jokes. There is always enough time for a few jokes and his humor. A Father Josef Kunz from Termas de Gravatal called on the telephone. He invited us both with Father Sérgio and Father Johann Höper to a midday meal.

#### **Thursday, 21 October 1999**

At 8:00 a.m. we sat down at the breakfast table. Elise and I did the dishes. Then I bought, with the Low German speaking Joana Michels (the Michels family stemmed from Hunsrück), two tops for 19.50 Reais. At 11:45 a.m. we, Father Sérgio, and Father Johann went to meet Father Josef Kunz. Again there was a warm welcome. Then soon we were called to the richly-laden table. There was soup with rice and cooked-egg garnish, cut beans, cold beans, red beets, rice, salad, fried chicken, besides wine. Father Josef Kunz is 82 years old. From a stroke he suffered he can no longer properly use his right leg and right arm. Practically every day at 5:00 p.m., he says a Holy Mass at home. There were three women occupied with the midday meal. His sister is his housekeeper. He was very happy that he could speak German with us. He is very interested in history and we determined that he has a great deal of knowledge about the history of emigration. After the leave-taking we went to Father Sérgio's and allowed ourselves to rest up a bit. Here in Armazém a man died today at the age of 92 years. He'll be buried early tomorrow at 8:30 a.m. At the church there's a high bell tower from which the death and burial of the man was made known using a loud-speaker. Further church notices were likewise broadcast over the loud-speaker equipment. First music was played so that everybody would pay attention, then followed the church announcements. There were two deceased citizens who will be buried today; at 5:00 p.m. there will also be a burial.

All the people are very nice and friendly to us. Martin went to see the people who would enjoy speaking German with him. I found myself on the road to the church and went to Mass at 4:30 p.m. In the

church I saw old women, old men, young women with children, young people and kids. It was a Mass for the ill, each one received personally after Mass the blessing of Father Johann; before, he had gone through the church and blessed everyone with Holy Water. Father Sérgio was away on pastoral duties. Martin brought Mrs. Boing with him to the parish house. Coming along, also, were an 81-year-old and a religious Order sister (whose ancestors were Hardt). All were pleased by what Martin could tell them about their ancestors. At 8:30 p.m. Father Sérgio arrived and brought with him valuable documents for Martin; he sat down immediately and looked through them. I went to bed at 9:45 p.m. Martin looked over the documents until midnight.

### **Friday, 22 October 1999**

At 8:00 a.m. a woman picked us up and took us to Rio São João, São Martinho, to the family of Helmut and Marly Stortz. We were time and time again amazed how friendly the people were to us. Helmut had a VW-Bully with great ground clearance. Bad roads for this car were not too great an obstacle. Helmut took us to several old dwelling places in which descendants of Germans, specifically Münsterland immigrants, lived under Spartan, indeed often shabby conditions. Also the outside appearance of the people and the housing in the border areas of the town is often not to be compared with our living standard. If however many people whom we met were poorly dressed and the home furnishings were quite meager, their friendly nature, the hospitality, the Low German conversation, and the sincere words of thanks for our visit allowed us to forget everything else. The awareness that the people very much appreciated and liked us stuck with us.

Helmut showed us the family-owned wild and romantic waterfall. At this beautiful spot his parents' house had stood, and he was born here. For 13 years, Helmut had operated a water-powered sawmill here. From 160 meters high he had laid cement pipe (40 centimeters in diameter) from the wild stream to his turbine in the sawmill on the primeval forest ground on the mountainside. Only that way could he get the required pressure for the operation of the turbine. Only the ground slab and part of the support wall still give a sign of his enterprise. The small sweet bananas, after the required ripening, will be harvested for family and friends. The primeval forest exerts its rights and devours constantly everything that indicates human activity. At the waterfall, I had climbed far out on the large driftblock. Helmut said directly to Martin, "Hopefully, Hildegard doesn't fall." Right then and there it happened. The two of them couldn't stop (crying) laughing, so I had to see how, alone, I could crawl back up again. In some places my skin was quite chafed.

Helmut told quite a lot about his occupation as a self-employed turbine and waterwheel builder, about his technical improvement, and his time as a sawmill operator with his own freight vehicle. As he described the course of his life, tears often came to his eyes, bitter tears. Events of the Second World War; severe accidents; straits with money, borrowed, stolen; storms: all were often appalling and mentally difficult to cope with. Fate did not always deal kindly with him. He owned forest, meadow and farmland, large areas (mountain slopes and poor soil), but he could not draw any great benefit out of it. He still operated a metal-working shop in which he repaired everything "from old made new" for people; also, should the occasion arise, he worked on motor vehicles. There is certainly no request in his metal-working that he cannot carry out, to the satisfaction of his customers.

Martin recommended to him that he write down his life with all its negative and positive aspects (with the latter, however, surely belong the music and singing) for his children. The married couple have four magnificent children, three sons and a daughter. The positive hereditary disposition of the parents would surely help the children to establish a hopefully better and happier work life. Kurt will follow in the footsteps of his father Helmut in the metal-working operation, and Klaus, in the metal-working craft, has founded and built the Stortz Factory; Gerti is married to the Colonist Lucas Hemkemeier from Rio Fortuna. Marly is a nice, considerate woman; she looks after house and garden with many flowers and an intensive amount of maintenance. One can feel at ease in their home.

On the trip in the direction of the Stortz' waterfalls, Helmut wanted to visit the well-known colonist

and animal (non-medical) practitioner Weber without an arranged appointment. He, his wife, and the home helper sat on the turned-toward-us little terrace of the house and saw us coming. We had to open the meadow gate and drive across pastureland without a road to the gate on the edge of the garden. Such a thing would be unthinkable in Germany. The married couple Weber and the helper greeted us warmly; our visit was a welcome change in their dreary everyday life in the outer area. For reasons of age, the Webers had reduced their farming and grazing operations down to meet their own domestic requirements. Mr. Weber told very interesting stories from his work life as a healer of animals. One could sense that his activity was more a calling than an occupation. He showed us an old book that by means of good illustrations of the different animal ailments and of birthing aids provides good assistance for an animal practitioner. He showed us pictures of calves in the cow's womb, which in various locations would not enter the birth canal without the help of a proficient animal practitioner. A calf with an incorrect position in the cow's body will be turned by him so that it will be born without complications. During his long career, Mr. Weber had earned a great deal of trust from the colonists. A doctor of veterinary medicine had been caring for the livestock of the colonists for a few years. Upon beginning his practice, he asked Mr. Weber, through his practical experiences, to back him up on many occasions. The view through the open living-room door and of the milieu of the living space, with the outer appearance of the married couple and the housekeeper gave us the impression that they live a very Spartan, but at the same time very contented existence. Again a very cordial leave-taking with the exchange of good wishes.

We visited also, again unannounced of course, the Olinda Koep family. The Low-German-speaking Olinda was very happy that Helmut Stortz visited her with his German guests, and that we gave her the gift of our time for a brief visit.

She asked the three of us to sit down. The furnishings in the living-room were so puny that one of the chair-backs almost fell to the floor when Martin sat down. Martin noticed then to his relief that it was a very old broken spot and the back was attached only by a nail. Olinda said, spontaneously, "Martin, that doesn't matter, we intend to throw the chair out anyway." Olinda was very sad that the conversation conducted in Low German was brought to an end at Helmut's request. After a cordial leave-taking and good wishes for the coming times, we traveled on. We saw Olinda wave, until the Bully disappeared from her angle of vision.

In sight of the Stortz family waterfall we visited another neighbor whose name escapes me. The joy over our unannounced visit was great. The family, that spoke only Low German, asked us to be seated in the hall. Helmut, we, and the colonist family spoke about many things of daily life, and about God and the world. The hall had been given conspicuous artistic attention for the last time in 1931. A colorful, tasteful, matching edging gave evidence of a certainly better time or of a voluntary artistic effort on the part of a painter from their circle of relatives and acquaintances. Was that the reason that for nearly 70 years no additional renovation had been undertaken? I realized that (the wind) was moving quite a lot in the area of the back of my neck. Helmut asked that the window be closed. The old lady said, "That does no good; there are no panes in that window." The privy (WC) is very Spartan, placed in an open barn. The supply of fresh water was run through a separate feed line from a high-lying stream to the house. It ran like a spring, constantly, into a large washtub with overflow. Martin could not get his fill of looking at the old-fashioned tools and utensils in the barn, and of course also the furnishings in the house. One had the feeling that time had stood still in the house for a hundred years. In order to be able to live in such an environment, one would have to be ignorant of the standard of living in modern homes. The family lives mainly on their own products from their pastures and farming. After a cordial farewell, and all good wishes, we traveled on.

In the evening towards 9:00 p.m. we went to eat fish. It was a former colonist, who away from the built-up area, had given up farming to find his life's foundation in the restaurant trade. We sat in a large hall, which was open on all sides. The floor is cement; everything kept a little country-style. The food is quite tasty. There's roasted fish and other national dishes. We always try everything, and everything was brought to us until we were satisfied. For food and drink for seven people we paid 22 Reais. Helmut than drove us with confidence over the bumpy road home.

**Saturday, 23 October 1999**

About 9:00 a.m. we went out again with the VW-Bully. Marly also traveled with us. First we visited their son Klaus. He built driers for the tobacco sheds and also fabricated all other commissions for metal-work. He is a friendly person, as are Kurt and Gerti. Martin especially took to little Heidi, Gerti's daughter. She was two years old, and for her age had an unusually large German vocabulary. Then it was off over a long, poor stretch of road to a vacation park, situated on a river in the middle of the wilderness. With skill, the owner had fashioned a paradise there: 23 different fruit-growing areas, giant ornamental shrubs, poinsettias, in many different ways a magnificent display of flowers in all shades of color. There were little arch bridges over running water, animal ponds, groups of seats, simply everything that one could think of on the gigantic grounds. In the building there were eight guest rooms upstairs. Each room has its own decoration and design. The owner showed us everything and said that his 76-year-old mother had developed, made, and put up the complete interior decorations. Unfortunately, we didn't get to meet her. She must indeed be an artist and at the same time a good interior decorator. At midday, we ate the Brazilian national dish there: red beans. Cooked with them were pork tail, feet, and ribs. In addition, there was rice and salad, and fresh steaks were fried, as many as we wanted. A handsome ten-year-old boy, Robert, served us. He earned his pocket money here. I gave him a 1.50 Reais tip. He sparkled thankfully with his dark child's eyes. We were all of the opinion that from the zealous youth there could sometime come something of excellence. For four people, we paid 30 Reais for the food and drink. From there we went to Laguna on the ocean. A quite beautifully situated town near the beach that is gladly visited by tourists. Martin and Marly called on Pastor Antônio Gerônimo Herdt. He could not grasp that a man had come from Germany and could indicate to him the dates and places of origin of his ancestors. Laguna has a swimming beach that is known all over the country.

Known through events of the Guerra dos Farrapos, Laguna was an important theater of war. A famous name from that time is that of Anita Garibaldi, the wife of José Garibaldi. The married couple Garibaldi fought in various battles, once in Brazil and then again in Italy. The image of Anita Garibaldi, however, became immortal in the history of both countries. While the war has already been over for a long time, her story still lives on in the museum of the city. There are a great number of resorts, seas, and beaches worth seeing and experiencing. There are good surf-boarding opportunities at the Praia do Mar Grosso and possibilities for fishing and the pursuit of many water sports. A further attraction of Laguna is the carnival. With its different samba schools and music groups, the *Carnaval* of Laguna is the most important in Santa Catarina. Beginning with the famous "*Zé Pereira*" the carnival of Laguna is today one of the biggest tourist attractions of Santa Catarina. It takes place at the same time as the other carnival events of the country, in the bright nights between February and March, and has become today the best of Santa Catarina, and one of the best of Southern Brazil. (["http://www.santa-catarina.net"](http://www.santa-catarina.net))

We went, besides, to a church and a cemetery. Those Martin simply has to see. Our VW-Bully had a flat tire, but Helmut fixed the problem very quickly.

From there we went to Rio Fortuna. For the Brazilians that's no distance. I can't say at all how many kilometers we covered that day. Many stretches, above all the non-paved roads, seem to us especially long, because we could only go at a snail's pace. Now it was off to Father Alfonso Schlickmann's (his ancestors came from Schöppingen), whom Marly and Helmut know well. Since in the chapel parishes, in arranged periods of time, the pastoral duty consists of the service, confessions, baptisms, weddings, Holy Communion, burials, and visiting the sick in the town, and the extensive outer areas that must be covered, there's a place to sleep for the clergyman in the sacristy or in an adjoining room of the chapel for his use. In the chapel of Rio São João (belonging to the office of the mayor of São Martinho) the pastoral duties, in this cycle of the seasons for many years, had been the obligation of Father Alfonso Schlickmann. Because Father Alfonso suffered from asthma, the very humid air and high temperature in the chapel rooms was not beneficial to his health.



The parents of Marly Stortz gave Father Alfonso a place to sleep and breakfast when he visited their community. It is easily understandable that Father Alfonso has developed a very special feeling of belonging to this hospitable family. Now back to the visit in the house of Father Alfonso. There was, however, only the Low-German-speaking housekeeper Lena and the parrot at home. All four of us had a human need. Lena showed us the toilet, which was accessible from the terrace. During the using of the toilet, the parrot made a constant, prolific racket and did lots of screeching, so that we could barely carry on a conversation. I asked Lena if the bird always made such a racket, that was in any case nearly unbearable. Lena answered approximately as follows (in Low German): "The parrot is not always so talkative, but he sees that all of you are using the toilet area, and he is very angry about that, because he thinks that you are making unauthorized use of his room, since I always put him in there at night." When guests come, then the parrot says spontaneously in German and Portuguese, "Father Alfonso is not here." To help support himself, Father Alfonso had, besides a large vegetable garden, a milk cow and a large and a small steer in the meadow near his house. Lena said, Father Alfonso was saying a nuptial Mass at the time in a chapel, thus it was some 10 kilometers of backtracking. But he was no longer there; it was said that he had already gone back home. We went over the 10 kilometers again back to Father Alfonso, who was waiting for us and greeted us warmly. He listened attentively to Martin's explanation of his emigration research and promised to do what he could to help him. At 9:00 p.m. we were again at the Stortz home and ate a meal. Until 12:30 a.m. we mulled over problems and sought to change the world. Helmut had in the meantime replaced a gasket on the Bully. Marly and Helmut were happy that we not only talked, but could listen, too. Marly gave me arrowheads that were used by the Indians for hunting. I, and also Martin, know how to appreciate precious objects.

### **Sunday, 24 October 1999**

At 7:00 a.m. we were awakened by our nice hosts. After breakfast cuttings were collected in the garden. Everything was well packaged. The stay at the home of Marly and Helmut Stortz was coming to an end. They delivered us with their Bully at 9:45 a.m. sharp at the home of Father Sérgio in Armazém. Father Sérgio was still saying Mass in the parish church; the next one in the chapel at São José was at 11:00 a.m. Father Sérgio explained to us that in the two days of our absence, he had carried out the already mentioned two burials, married two couples, and baptized seven children. He told us that he can say every Mass with the same rapt attention. Father Sérgio Hemkemeier in his capacity as pastor must serve a very large parish with a chapel community. He is always friendly and in a good mood. Where does the 76-year-old clergyman get the strength? Father Sérgio is a good pastor who never tires of helping out in any place where he is needed. The telephone at his house is never quiet. Everyone wants his advice. On many days he gives up to 40 of the faithful priestly counsel and psychotherapeutic help.

Farewell to Marly and Helmut. Will we see them again? Quickly into another car and away. During the Mass in the chapel there was a baptism. Father Sérgio did it as always without any trouble. Today is Mission Sunday. There'll be a collection. It is usually set up so the basket is next to the altar, and anyone who wishes to put something in it goes there. Here, however, an assistant does the collecting. The wooden box was not extended, however, unless whoever-wished-to-give raised a hand. For the good things, we put 10 Reais in the collection box. But Father Sérgio sent the man one more time through the church; he thought that he had not collected the donated money from everywhere. Then he asked Martin: "Martin, would you like to put something in also?" Martin said in a loud voice, "I already have." Just imagine that in Osterwick! A young, pretty (female) lector led us through the Mass. She and Elise filled the church with their beautiful singing. Before the Mass Father Sérgio had already informed the faithful that a German married couple would be guests in the church. Father Sérgio asked Martin and me, after the Mass, to come to the altar and introduce ourselves and to tell a little something about the research. Well, we were used to this now. Out from the pew and in front of the altar. Martin was brief, but he used the right words. He spoke in broad outline about emigration, thanked all the families, who had greeted us so friendly or made contact with us, praised the magnifi-

cent chapel about which they could be so proud, and especially their pastor Father Sérgio. The members of the parish could fortunately appreciate that they had such a good pastor and toiler in God's Vineyard. Then Martin clasped Sérgio by his broad shoulders. The faithful clapped and the children looked at us as though we had come from another planet. Father Sérgio told Martin later that the people here would never forget that someone came from Germany and had admired their church. They had all made great personal sacrifices for their chapel. Father Sérgio called from the altar, "Hildegard, have you already taken a photo?" I then photographed the family with the child to be baptized.

Elise stayed with her family on Sunday; São José is her hometown. We went by way of Rio Fortuna to the Hemkemeier farm; long distances were no longer foreign to us. But what was waiting for us there, we'll never forget! Uncles, aunts, Bettina's children with partners and children, and we were altogether 36 persons. It was a proper welcoming ceremony, so many people, three kisses for each. They had a hall with a roof, open on three sides, two gigantically long tables and benches to the side of the fireplace. I don't know whether they had butchered an ox. Lucas, the young farmer, gave a short speech before the meal in which he gave us all a cordial welcome. There was good baked fish and salads, very delicious, in addition to beer and lemonade. Practically every one of the daughters had made a contribution to the banquet by bringing a delicious salad. A type of frozen treat was served as dessert. Bettina said to me, "Want to have another sugar stinker?" She told me among other things that in the previous week she'd seen a mother monkey with her offspring in the tobacco field. Lucas, the heir to the farm, showed us then his livestock buildings, machinery, and the two draft oxen; afterwards the house. It had been built in 1931, and in the following decades, there had been no major alterations in the interior arrangement. It consisted of a large kitchen, small rooms, bathroom, and a hall. Gerti Stortz (the daughter of Marly and Helmut Stortz) is married to Lukas Hemkemeier. From the marriage came the sweet little daughter Heidi. In the garden everything grows good and large as at our home, except all through the year. In addition there were many peach and orange trees, and still many other fruits that we didn't know. On one shrub hung little fruit almost like small, long oranges. One has to eat them with the skin, then they are very sweet. Martin bit through the fruit and the juice sprayed me in the face and my eyes. In the beginning, I couldn't see anything. I took my glasses off and my tears ran in streams. Little Heidi saw that and said, "Aunt, must not bawl." She'll be two years old in November. What will the little one finally become? She is intelligent, like we have never before seen in a two-year-old.

Martin and I were appealed to time and time again by someone wanting to learn about the customs and traditions in the country of origin, Germany. Martin conversed for a long time with the brother of Sérgio. The over 70-year-old Frederico Hemkemeier was a farmer not far from the parental home. Their conversation was conducted naturally in Münsterland dialect (Low German). He intimated to Martin very mysteriously that he wanted to show him something in the house that he would certainly be interested in. They went from the festive hall into the house, then Frederico went into the room that is reserved in the parental home as a staying place for his brother Father Sérgio. He rummaged about a little in the room, and then appeared with a plastic bag. Frederico pulled the contents out of the bag, and out came Martin's book *Elsen*. He didn't know until then, that Martin was the author of the book. Now, he had to show his book with pride in the banquet hall. That bestowed a quite exceptional value on Martin's book for all the guests. Martin had given his book to Father Sérgio, with a dedication on the Golden Jubilee of his priesthood, in our home, on 12 September 1998. Following a richly-laden coffee break with cakes and pastries garnished with fresh fruit, Sérgio urged our departure. After the big, cordial leave-taking and our thanks to the hosts for the invitation to the banquet, we were ready to leave. We started out at 4:30 p.m. and traveled through the partly untouched primeval forest. Sérgio said when he visited his parental home he stopped his car at this spot and said a prayer. We could comprehend the reverence for unspoiled Nature.

According to a previous arrangement, we visited the 87-year-old Robert Tenfen. The family was already waiting for us on the terrace and greeted us quite warmly. Mr. Tenfen had written a book about the settlement of Rio Fortuna. Martin, and Alfred Efting in Dorsten, had already had his book for several years and stayed in contact with him through letters. He was a schoolteacher and for decades a

highly-regarded choir-master in Rio Fortuna. Appearances of the choir in different towns in the State of Santa Catarina had made the choir known far beyond the borders of the district. It is a very elegant house. They gave us coffee and fresh, warm pastries. The maid stood, always ready to serve us, but did not take a place at our table. The son-in-law is a doctor. Father Sérgio left us for a little while to talk with Father Alfonso about planning tomorrow's appointments. We still did not know what was waiting for us tomorrow. After the leave-taking from the Tenfen family, we went with Heinrich Michels and Elise to a fish pond area with restaurant and banquet hall. After a stroll along the "inland sea," before we departed for Armazém, we all refreshed ourselves with the thick, juicy jaboticaba fruit, which grows directly on the tree trunks lined up like pearls. We all had enough intake of food for today. We Sérgio, Elise, Heinrich, Martin, and I exchanged views with each other and drank a cup of tea. Martin still felt a need to at least speak by telephone to the dentist Lorenz Oenning (whose ancestors came from Eggerode). The study group had had contact with him through letters for several years. He was very happy to hear Martin, but insisted nevertheless on seeing him, and getting to know him in person. He immediately drove his car from Braço do Norte to Heinrich Michels in Armazém. Martin waited for him there with Heinrich and Joana. Martin of course had a lively discussion with him in Low German about family research. It is interesting that Martin found again in the family documents of Oenning, his lists and photocopies, and letters with research results, which he had sent to other families for circa five years. In research circles in Brazil it is customary just as it is in other places in the world that research results make their rounds through copies. Now the needle in the haystack can be found. After the leave-taking and the promise that the letter contact will not end, Martin came back at 10:00 p.m. It has been established again and again that all the people were happy when they could speak Low German with us, and thankful for becoming personally acquainted.

### **Monday, 25 October 1999**

Following breakfast we prepared ourselves at 9:00 a.m. for as yet unknown activities. At Father Sérgio's we seldom knew what he had planned for us, and where the next destination was. In the car today, I said a prayer to the Mother of God. In Braço do Norte Martin spoke with the widow Maria Schlickmann Brüning concerning the lending of the notes of her late husband, the mayor Daniel Brüning. He had planned to write a book about the town Braço do Norte. She left us with the information that at some uncertain time Valberto Dirksen could look through everything and eventually utilize it. In the São Ludgero parish office Martin gave back the chronicle of the parish after photocopying it for our study group. We greeted the unmarried teacher Iva Buss, who carries out her duties in the school next to the parish house. Sérgio is very well-acquainted with the family. We were invited to the coffee time there in the afternoon. By way of Rio Fortuna and over a saturated-with-potholes, long, unpaved road, far away from the city, we arrived at Maria Salete Schür(h)off's. Father Alfonso Schlickmann, with housekeeper Helena, and the brother of Father Alfonso, Adolf Schlickmann, with his wife, were already there and working together had prepared a fantastic meal for us. There were cut beans, crispy fried chicken, lentils, red beets, carrots, and for dessert peaches. Now we learned for the first time that the owner of the property, the married couple Schüroff, had simply invited us there only to meet us and become acquainted. He is a self-employed master cabinet-maker with seven employees in his workplace and still spoke some Low German. She admittedly didn't understand us, however, the spark immediately jumped over. A very sympathetic, pretty wife who works as a masseuse to make her contribution to the family. The people came into the house, laid down on her bed, and she stood there, bending over and massaging them. We couldn't get over how uncomplicated, without a massage table, the difficult massage was performed. It was really embarrassing for us, how the people went to so much trouble for us and thanked us for our visit. Maria Salete squeezed us so firmly and warmly at our departure, spoke at the same time many Portuguese words, and said good-bye with a kiss. As we got in the car to leave we were dismissed with a farewell song (naturally in the German language), "*Auf Wiedersehn* [Until we meet again], auf Wiedersehn, don't stay away so long". Again, we had got to know people that one had to like.

It was 3:00 p.m., the agreed time for the invitation at the home of the two Buss women in Braço do Norte for a cup of coffee. Senhora Iva Buss is a teacher, as I already mentioned; she lives with her 83-year-old mother. To judge by the condition of the house and the furnishings, they are prosperous people. The mother explained in the Low German language that she had had nine children, of whom three were premature births, and two step-children from the first marriage of her husband. She had been married to her husband for nineteen years. His wish was to have fifteen children. She had in her parental home a very difficult childhood. The father was very strong; he had always urged his children to work in the field. She thought back to the time of her youth only reluctantly. The paths to get to the milking of the cows and to the other field work had to be managed by everyone on foot. The daughter was five years old when the father died. She had already said, as a small child, I won't marry; I'll look after Mother. After a lively Low German conversation concerning the past and the present, Father Sérgio looked at his watch; the time of our next invitation was drawing near.

They expressed their thanks for our visit and were sad that we had not eaten a great deal, and above all things they were sorry that we couldn't stay longer. Once more a cordial leave-taking, and, right away, onward!

The next stop was with Father Josef Kunz who lives in Termas de Gravatal on Daniel-Brüning Street. He had already called the parish house to see if we weren't coming. He had already prepared something for Martin and was happy to see us again.

After the farewell to Father Josef Kunz we drove to the parish house at 5:00 p.m. We quickly freshened up for the next visit to the home of August Brüning, who lived in the family of his daughter and son-in-law. He told us in our dialect he had always intended to go to Germany, however, he always lacked the money, and now was old and ill. Still his eyes sparkled when Martin showed him the traces of his emigrating ancestors in his papers. The granddaughter didn't move from our side; she found the German language right interesting. The parting had to be, because we had an engagement with an as yet unknown outcome waiting for us this evening. We went on further to São Martinho, where the Stortz family had prepared something for us in the home of the son Klaus. Helmut and Marly's sons, Klaus and Kurt with wives, a nephew and two granddaughters, all dressed in costumes, took their places for a completely private presentation. The guitars were tuned, then began the joyful-to-listen-to music, played and sung with a considerable repertoire of German songs. A large glass, filled with Berkenbrock schnapps, made the rounds between times. Then they said, "Let's burn one." Toward 10:00 p.m. various prepared pizzas were shared and eaten. This "private concert," arranged for us, we will surely never forget. The final farewell from the Stortz family with a thank-you for the inspired surprise was the end of an experience-filled day. It was after 11:00 p.m. when we arrived in Armazém. Father Sérgio still had to administer extreme unction to a seriously ill person. The hospital is close to the parish house. Time plays no roll in the pastoral duties in Brazil. Father Sérgio would often be called on at night. At breakfast, when we felt sorry for his interrupted night's rest, he said, "If I'm awakened three times in the night by a telephone call, then I have the pleasure of going to sleep four times altogether." Is that not amazing when someone knows how to make the best out of any situation?

## **Tuesday, 26 October 1999**

After one last good night's rest in the beautiful pastoral inn, we breakfasted at 8:00 a.m. In the private chapel Father Sérgio gave us the travel blessing. We said good-bye to Elise. We hugged each other and parted with the three kisses customary in Brazil. Martin's and my eyes, as well as Elise's, were damp. She is truly a jewel and not so easy to replace as housekeeper for the parish manager Sérgio. We took Maria Salete Schüroff from a prearranged pickup point with us to Florianópolis. She is a totally pleasant person. Between times she caressed and treated my covered-by-scratches, from mosquito bites, hands. On the way we stopped at a roadside stand and drank sugar cane juice; also, we ate some corn in a pastry pocket. Four servings, four large glasses of sugar cane juice cost altogether 6

Reais. A vacationer can truly be happy with the prices.

We arrived precisely at 12:00 noon at the sister house in Florianópolis. Sérgio's Sister Anna (a nun) was already expecting us and greeted us. She offered us right away an already-prepared midday meal. After, we conversed in our dialect; Sérgio's sister showed us the cloister garden and the private chapel. Towards 1:00 p.m. Valberto picked us up. Farewell to the considerate Father Sérgio. We were very thankful to him because he could arrange for us to acquire so many impressions through the mutual family visits and excursions. I believe, too, that it was a wonderful experience for Sérgio to experience Martin as mediator between the country of origin, Germany, and the Brazilian Münsterland. He surely had not expected that in response to our trip so many people would be motivated to call him and invite us to get together with them.

At Valberto's place we first rested for a while. Duty called him to the university. Today was Dulce's birthday. Martin and Valberto called some people with whom Martin had already had contact for years by letter, because a visit on account of the great distances in Brazil was not practical. We went to sleep at 10:00 p.m. because we were pretty well worn out.

### **Wednesday, 27 October 1999**

We ate breakfast at 9.30 a.m. Valberto had to be at the university until about 12:00 noon. I could call our daughter Martina. We were both very happy to hear each other's voice. Everything was well. Father Sérgio already called at 8:30 a.m. wishing to know if we had slept well. Elise said in German, "Good morning, Hildegard and Martin." She complained that her house was so empty without us, and that we had left behind in the house a "homesickness for us." Father Sérgio will perhaps in the year 2000 come to Germany and say a Mass in the Low German language for us in Osterwick. After the midday meal Valberto took Martin with him to the State Archives. They saw original landowner documents of the colonists, ships passenger lists, and other important documents for emigration research. It was a very interesting experience for Martin. I still have to record some experiences and write down the important details in my diary so that the later travel account has no gaps in it. Today was a rainy day; we rested. After a 19-year search, Martin had found about a year earlier in Rio Novo S.C. the family of Henrich Küper (Holz/Richters) that emigrated to Brazil in 1862. Around 7:00 p.m. we went with Valberto to visit Fridolino David and his wife Rosa, a descendant of the Küper / David family. He owns a small, but beautiful little house in Florianópolis. He is a living history book. He can tell a great deal about the family connections in the early days in a very good Low German. As acknowledgment he always says, "Certainly, certainly!" We didn't meet his wife on that evening because she had to visit a very ill sister. With his wife he also spoke only Low German. If his wife forgot, during a conversation, and started talking in the language of the country, Fridolino was quiet as long as it took for Rosa to notice her faux pas and continue the conversation in the Low German language with her Fridolino. Fridolino told us, "I will keep the Low German language my whole life up until my death." He regretted that we could not stay longer. Yet, we saw him one more time on Saturday in Rio Novo. Martin was the second German that he had seen in his life. I have to tell something more about this family later. We parted from Fridolino and were happy that we would see him again on Saturday. It rained on the way home. We entered the house at 10:00 p.m. after an experience-filled day.

### **Thursday, 28 October 1999**

Valberto, Martin, and I went to the university. We saw Valberto's work-place and his office. A brief visit with a deputy director with whom Valberto spoke about our research project. Valberto had important, interesting photocopies prepared for Martin for his research. We drank a cup of Capuccino together, very cozily. I bought a small lace tablecloth for 12 Reais as a souvenir. In the bank we exchanged currency; for one dollar we received 1.92 Reais. If we were to live here with our money, we

could treat ourselves very well. I'm thankful that it's going well for us. Here many people live in degrading conditions in huts (Favelas) on the edge of the city.

The genealogical meeting was in a restaurant at 7:00 p.m. The landlady was a later-born Berkenbrock. There were some 22 persons: 1 Bishop, 1 Monsignor, 1 Pastor. Many spoke German and also Low German. There was a substantial meal; we could serve ourselves and didn't need to pay. There were many young people, historians, professors, family researchers, and emigration researchers there. Martin told the thrilling story of the emigrant Katharina Krämer / Berkenbrock. The landlady was very moved, so interested, to learn unknown information about her ancestress. Mrs. Elise Philippi and Valberto translated Martin's remarks. Many had specific questions about emigration research. Many of the members had come because they had read Martin's article in the *Brasil-Post*. Mr. Osias Alves, a reporter, had come in order to make an appointment for an interview for his newspaper. The evening was very important for Martin. To present our emigration research among people who think like we do, was an important component of our trip. When a study group in each of the two countries is pursuing the same goal, the common endeavor can only be rewarding.

### Friday, 29 October 1999

After breakfast we started first at the university at 8:00 a.m. because Valberto still had duties. After a brief length of time we went traveling on a beautiful, sunny spring day. At many lookout places we stopped and enjoyed the view over the ocean and beaches. At a rest stop we drank again sugar cane juice with lemon juice. We went to Camboriú S.C.; in that place is a magnificent white-sand beach. I took my shoes off and went into the water. The ocean water was marvelously refreshing. A wave, with which I had not reckoned on at all, caught me, and my slacks were wet up to my knees. We were in a shop just to acquire a souvenir. We bought a magnificent mussel-shell for 27 Reais. Valberto showed us the beautiful summer house of Olinda and Vital not far from the beach. One apartment they'd rented out, and two apartments were there for use during their planned beach vacation. Then we traveled along the beach and enjoyed the marvelous view of the countryside and of the ocean.

Balneário Camboriú is a well-known tourist center in the Federal State of Santa Catarina Bundesstaat Santa Catarina. The resort area lies at the mouth of the Itajai-Acu River. The climate is moderate, with the average temperature from the months of December to March about 35 degrees Celsius (= about 95 degrees Fahrenheit). In the winter it is mild. The total population of the core region of Camboriú is about 70000 inhabitants, which in the peak season December to February together with Balneário Camboriú exceeds 1,000,000! The main attraction of Camboriú is its beaches, which are bordered by the *Avenida Atlântica* (Atlantic Avenue). This and the many "kiosks" are "the" rendezvous points of the city. One of the most beautiful spots is the Ilha das Cabras, which can be visited by ship. Other attractions are the Santa Inês Church, built in the form of a straw hat, the Church of Santo Amaro, which was attended by the royal family; they contain also rare objects of great historical value. Further the Park of Camboriú, located at the end of BR 101, where the visitor can get to know the roots of the State. The newest attraction is the 33-meter-high Cristo Luz, from which one has a "fabulous view." All this will be perfected by a further seven natural beaches. During the months March through December, Balneário Camboriú is a convention city. The city offers in 75 hotels a capacity of 11000 beds, in addition 150 restaurants and innumerable bars, an event center (of Santa Catarina Turismo) with 5000 square meters and an auditorium with seating for 2500. "<http://www.santa-catarina.net>"

In Itajai the Anton Effting family was waiting for us in order to invite us to a midday meal. When we arrived, there was a cordial greeting; we had already become acquainted with each other at the Golden Wedding of the married couple Berkenbrock. The table was as generously spread as we had already often experienced. Yet here there was pudding and beforehand a Pina Colada. The son, Jaimy, with

whom our study group had already had contact by letters for some years, took over the research results of his aunt Maria Tabita Effting Feuser in Vargem do Cedro. He will, as he told me, continue further with the Effting family research. His father Anton Effting had a store for veterinary medicine and seeds of all kinds. As we were taking our leave, Mr. Bläser arrived from Itajai, whom Bernhard and Annemarie Wieskus from Coesfeld had recommended to us as a pleasant, gregarious man. After the greeting, he would gladly have shown us his orchid cultivation. We had, however, no more time. After the farewell to the large Effting family and Mr. Bläser, we traveled back the same way that we had chosen for the journey there.

„Itajai“ has one of the most important ports of Azores origin in the north of the Federal State of Santa Catarina. The population numbers more than 90,000 inhabitants and the city is today a tourist and financial center. Besides a good hotel trade, Itajai also has restaurants, bars, and other attractions, such as the church which was built in the Gothic style and decorated with paintings by Aldo Locatelli and Emilio Sessa. In the city there are three museums and many monuments at different spots in the city. In the south where the beaches are located, the Bico do Papagaio arouses interest: a unique stone in the form of a bird's head. A lighthouse was put into service in 1902. The Marejada, or the “Portuguese Fisherman Festival” got its start in Itajai in 1987 and with it the tourist and economic potential of the city and the region was made known. At the center of the events of Itajai-Tur there are folklore groups, shows, dance organizations, national and international bands. An additional attraction is the typical Portuguese cuisine, which one finds in the diverse restaurants. The typical fish dishes are: stockfish (dried cod) dumpling, green soup, fish pie, and seafood. There is pleasure in the eating and in the events. At the same time one finds the business and industry exhibition which shows off products from the region, such as textiles, confections, and hand-crafted items, and souvenirs. (<http://www.santa-catarina.net>).

At 4:00 p.m. we arrived right on time at the editorial office of Mr. Alves in Biguacu to have a joint interview for an article in his newspaper. While Mr. Alves asked us about our activities in emigration research his mother offered us coffee. After the discussion was sufficiently finished for Mr. Alves, the leave-taking followed, and we were right back on the road to Florianópolis. We rode in an endless backup (of traffic); in addition it was also still quite warm.

We picked up the developed film at Florianópolis. The development of a 36-exposure film cost 16.50 Reais. As a special service one can have three pictures enlarged at no charge.

After the meal we were invited to the home of the Raulino Jungklaus family. Verena, his wife, spoke very good German. They have three grown children; of course, he is a serious researcher in emigration and family research. In his workroom he showed Martin the finished results of his research. For many years Raulino visited the cemeteries of both religions in Santa Catarina in order to record the complete gravestone inscriptions with the life and death data as a basis for later research.

Verena's family is also of German origin. Naturally, her family history was recorded in a booklet with great care. She is a teacher and spoke a very good German. Those were entertaining hours in the Jungklaus family circle. At 10:00 p.m. we were back at the house and quickly went to bed, because we were really tired.

### **Saturday, 30 October 1999**

We went with Valberto and Dulce after breakfast to the St. Amaro da Imperatriz Square, where the warm springs bubble out of the earth at up to 40 degrees C. (= 104 degrees F.). In the building complex with the necessary health area for a stay at a health spa, there was a large, well-kept park with a small open museum on the grounds, a suspension bridge that led over a wild stream; all around everything was wonderfully done. We had to go, because we wanted to arrive right on time for the next appointment.

The historian and book author Toni Jochem, who had already visited us in Osterwick, was waiting for us in Aguas Mornas in front of the community building. Then also the mayor arrived driving the community's Bully. The VW-Bully with the great ground-clearance was clearly the right choice for our upcoming endeavor. On the way the German-speaking deputy mayor also climbed in with us. First we looked around a health resort. They showed us the general and bathing rooms among the assembly rooms at the spa, and the very tastefully-decorated single rooms. A conference hall is integrated into this area. In Germany one would consider this health resort and spa a very exclusive and high-level institution.

The Bully team with the experienced-driver-and-mayor took off again. The destination was Rio Novo, lying between two mountains. Valberto had already prepared us for the poor stretch of roads, yet so bad as they really were we had not expected. We went through deep mud, until we stopped in Theresópolis. Martin was deeply moved; he was at the time in the sleepy town between the mountains which for the Münsterland emigrants had a great historical meaning. Father Wilhelm Roer from Münster had assembled there a large number of colonists in order, following a discussion with the Brazilian government, to lead them by primeval forest paths to new settlement locations with fertile soil. We visited the cemetery of Theresópolis with the monument of the unforgotten clergyman Father Wilhelm Roer. After taking some photos of this memorable place we started out again in order to reach our destination Rio Novo.

After a stretch of road roughly estimated by one of us as kilometers long, we arrived at the home of Helka and Augustinho David Lüdtké. After the opening of the pasture gates we drove over a bridge of the Rio Novo, through a damp cow pasture, up to the residence. The assembled David / Lüdtké family, among them the already mentioned Fridolino David (born 10 February 1933) with his wife Rosa, nee Wagner (born 10 October 1933), greeted us all cordially and bid us welcome. Fridolino had asked practically all of the relatives who could be reached to come, in order to show their respect for us and to get together. Each one wanted to embrace us, they were so happy at having Germans and then too relatives as guests. It was naturally also an event for the hosts that the mayor and his deputy took part in the meeting with the banquet. For Martin it was a high-point of the Brazilian journey to have found the descendants of the Küper family in Rio Novo after a 19-year search. After the greetings that didn't want to end, naturally in the Low German language, first the house, farm, and livestock buildings with the milieu of the house were looked at. The Lüdtkés had eight cows which provided milk for their own cheese manufacturing. We saw the fresh whole cheeses laid out to dry, which through sales help support the Lüdtké family. A giant hog in the barn was yet to be slaughtered. The large oven, with the masonry by Fridolino, had done its duty for the substantial spread of food on the midday table. Fridolino used the time to take from the attic the trousseau chest of his grandmother Anna Küper, who was born on 24 March 1860 in Osterwick. The carved monogram "A. Küper" in the chest lid was an unmistakable sign of the family membership. After lots of discussions the hosts ordered us to share the midday meal. It was truly the best command. For dessert there was a large pastry. The over 90-year-old mother of Fridolino and his siblings was very ill and bedridden. A stroke had left her blind and unable to move. Up until four months earlier she had still worked in the garden. Martin called the banquet guests together for the leave-taking in order to say a few words about the way the lucky discovery of the Küper family took place, and to thank the David Lüdtké family as hosts for the cordial reception and the tasty midday feast. Fridolino then spoke, with emotional words, some words of thanks to us, speaking also in the name of his large number of relatives living in Brazil. He and his siblings had never believed that they would be permitted to live long enough to get to know personally relatives from Germany. They were happy to hear about their place of origin, Osterwick, and above all to hear more about their ancestors and their history. They promised to include us in their prayers that we might always go well in life. Thus, yet one more big farewell according to Brazilian custom! Now under the leadership of Fridolino and his wife Rosa, both of whom got in the Bully with us, we had to go over the muddy road again in order to get to know the dwelling places of the Münsterland colonists and their own relatives. As I already mentioned Fridolino is a living history book. He knew the places and the names of the former owners, whose houses were torn down before or after the turn of the century. The heavy rain, which began at 12:00 noon, turned our further travel more and more



into a great adventure. If we had not had the marvelous mayor with his experienced driving, the further trip into the mountains would not have been possible. It poured frightfully; the water was in the car. At the final destination a magnificent valley opened up before us. Right at the bottom flowed the Rio Novo. The left slope of the Rio Novo (the colonists received from the State as a rule 100 acres allocated for reclamation) was taken in possession, following emigration in 1862/63, by the widow Anna Catharina Küper, nee Richters (born 3 May 1825, Osterwick, died 19 December 1906, Rio Novo) [The ancestral home is now Heinz Hidding, Rosendahl-Osterwick, Asbecker Straße Nr. 37], as the first colonist of the future town of Rio Novo. She united in a second marriage with Joseph Hermann Engelbert Kühlkamp (born 15 May 1835, Asbeck). Below in the valley on the pastureland still lie the four granite blocks on which the Kühlkamp house had stood with its four cornerposts. Martin would have liked to let the decades turn back in a time-lapse until the building of the house in the 19th Century in order to see the hard life of the colonists in the Brazilian primeval forest. Farewell to the simply beautiful area of the former Küper / Kühlkamp property in the valley of the Rio Novo.

On the way back we expressed our thanks to Fridolino for the good guidance and bid farewell to him and his wife Rosa following a Bully stop in the hills of the host David Lüdtke's family. The mayor drove us still confidently through mud and potholes (three times the car actually hit bottom with its oil pan) to Aguas Mornas.

On the worst stretch of road two cars were stuck; the passengers removed their shoes and helped each other out of the mud. Then when we finally had solid ground under the wheels again, the mayor received a big round of applause. We could not thank him nearly enough for his driving skills in the mud of Rio Novo. He said that was the least that he could do for us. He then showed us his office in the town hall and Toni Jochem's workplace. A daughter of Hilda Philippi (a niece of Valberto), who lived in Aguas Mornas, regretted that we didn't have time to take a coffee-break at her home. Another big farewell to the remaining participants, then it was on to Florianópolis. At 6:30 p.m. with Valberto and Dulce we attended Mass in the chapel of the Jesuit College. Evaldo Hemkemaier (a cousin of Father Sérgio Hemkemeier) was already in the church and greeted us. A youth group sang with guitar accompaniment. Following the Mass, Júlio Boing's daughter Áurea greeted us with her family. We were completely exhausted when we arrived at the house. Because everything had gone so well, we drank a bottle of wine, which Alfred Florin had bought during his stay in Brazil in May.

### **Sunday, 31 October 1999**

We got up at 8:30 a.m. I already had travel fever and packed the remaining things in our luggage. We ate breakfast calmly, and we let our exciting yesterday run through our thoughts. Father Sérgio called at 9:00 a.m. and wished to say farewell. Elise was sad; she had so much liked having us with her. Father Sérgio said we had left our homesickness behind us in Armazém. Martin told him another clean joke. Father Sérgio said that we will always find an open door at his home. He and Elise had cherished us and liked us. At 12:00 noon we went again to the restaurant in which the food is sold by weight. We paid 15.31 Reais for us four. There should be such a restaurant in Osterwick, too, then I wouldn't cook so often. After we were at the house, I labeled the photos that we had picked up yesterday, then we got a little rest.

Valberto went with us to the supermarket. Dulce had in the meantime put out food and coffee; it was our last snack with Dulce and Valberto. We were very grateful to Valberto for all that he had done for us. He had prepared for our journey down to the tiniest detail; without his dedication and his organization our days would not have been as informative, adventurous, and interesting. Valberto said he had become so committed himself to the others for Martin's work in emigration research, because I had believed in him. He felt it was important that Martin see the towns where the Münsterland emigrants in the 19th Century had settled, as well as where and how the descendants live today. It is indeed provident that Valberto and Martin have the same interests in emigration research. We are very grateful to Valberto that we were able to get to know Brazil from such a perspective. The experiences

in Brazil will give Martin especially and his colleagues Alfred Efting, Norbert Henkelmann, and Ingrid Seliger motivation to pursue the research even more intensely.

At 5:00 p.m. we went to the airport. Dulce went with us. Valberto arranged everything as always. We had to pay 156 Reais for the check-in.

Professor John Klug came to the airport in order to say good-bye to us. The Jungklaus family managed with their children to say adieu to us directly. A photo was taken quickly, then it was off into the airplane. It is a fantastic feeling when one goes up the gangway and from above can still wave once to the lovely people who gave us unforgettable impressions of South-Brazil.

Beforehand, the farewell to Valberto and Dulce. I think that we'll see each other again in Germany, and thereby can reciprocate their hospitality. All the Brazilian friends stood on the balcony of the airport terminal. Yet again waving and a blown kiss. It's doubtful whether we'll see these charming people again!

After we were seated in the Boeing 737, the plane took off at 7:10 p.m. After a short flight time we saw the impressive sea of lights of the giant city São Paulo. It was a marvelous picture such as we had never seen. On the plane there was a small snack. At 8:00 p.m. we had already landed again. We proceeded right away to gate 25 and waited for our call. The check-in was right on time. The airplane, again a MacDonnell Douglas (MD 11) with 267 seats, took off at 11:30 p.m. Captain Wotsch with his crew flew us securely to Frankfurt. We had seats 21a and 21b and more space than in the rows of four or three, which are lacking in freedom of movement for a flight time of nearly 11 hours. There were drinks and a midday meal, and then came sleep, over 10,000 meters high over the clouds. It was a completely smooth flight. At 1:50 p.m. we had a soft landing in Frankfurt, and we were more than a good piece closer to our home-town, and many experiences richer. I called the children. We had quite a long layover. At 5:40 p.m. we went by Boeing 737 on to Münster-Osnabrück. There Sabina was waiting for us. It was a beautiful feeling, after an experience-filled vacation, to be safe and sound at home, close to our children and grandchildren.

Rosendahl, 4 March 2000  
Hildegard and Martin Holz

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Prof. Dr. Paul Leidinger ( E-mail message from December 26, 1999)  
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Dear Mr. Holz,

Heartfelt thanks for your E-mail of December 18, 1999, which I discovered in my computer on Christmas Eve. I congratulate you on your journey through Brazil and your wife on the very informative story about your trip. It is so graphic that I can very vividly imagine your journey and encounters, particularly since I have for a long time familiarized myself with Santa Catarina's geography. I was surprised by the still very widespread knowledge of Low German. Also your description gives a view of the difficulty, but also the opportunities of the first settlers. I would like to have a photo of Pastor Wilhelm Roer's gravesite. Perhaps it's possible to make a print. My own research on Brazil has to be put on hold, because I'm occupied with the editing of a two-volume city history of Warendorf which has to be published in the middle of March for the 800-year anniversary of the city. At the present time, a student from Florianópolis is working with professor Dr. Johannes Meier at the University of Mainz on a dissertation about the German colonial settlers in Santa Catarina. His name is Paolo Diel. Sometime, he will go to Münster to utilize the archives. I'll give him your address, so that he may make direct contact with you. The main emphasis of his work is focused on the building of a religious life by the colonial settlers in Santa Catarina. In this respect, Pastor Topp from Warendorf is also an important reference person; as well as the archival material in the bishop's archives in Florianópolis. Have you not met the pastor of the cathedral there, Rev. Beesen? I'm pleased that mutual contacts become closer through research. Mr. Osias Alves, whom you became acquainted with, is also an active man. I've been in contact with him for a long time and suspect that shortly he will come to Germany for a visit. I got to know Professor Valberto Dierksen here in Warendorf at the time of his visit. I remember him fondly.

Perhaps it will be possible to arrange a meeting with each other during your visit to exchange views. For today, once again many thanks for your magnificent account and your greetings and wishes for the New Year, which I heartily reciprocate. Yours, Paul Leidinger.

Dear Holz Family (December 24, 1999,  
E-mail message from Peter Frey / Brüning from Switzerland)

Your greeting and story about Brazil pleased us greatly.

With your detailed and lively account you have provided for us a few beautiful moments from our home country. That's how we spent our childhood, also in the new regions of Northeast Paraná, where courageous families sought their fortune and thus like your ancestors, started completely from scratch. There are Brazilian-Münterlanders living there, likewise, who maintain their tradition and culture.

We're gathering further data about our family; my father left us a biography in which he described his childhood and his life in St. Ludgero. At some time, I still hope to get some interesting hints and information from the manuscript. The Kesting Family (Mother's side) are organizing a big occasion in St. Ludgero for the spring of 2000 in which "all" members of the family are supposed to come together.

We wish you and your relatives Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

P.S. If sometime you're in the area of Bodensee, we'd feel honored by a visit.

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