



FEEFHS News

The Foundation for East European Family History Studies - February 2018

FEEFHS Celebrating Anniversary Year



FEEFHS Board, left to right: Camille Andrus, Dave Obee, Joanne Sher, Kahlile Mehr, Walt Knepper, Greg Nelson, Milan Pohontsch, Joe Everett. (Pictured below: Thom Edlund, President.)

In 2018, the Foundation for East European Family History Studies (FEEFHS) is proud to host the 25th Annual East European Research Conference. This year, we also commemorate the 25th anniversary of the founding of FEEFHS. Truth be told, we need to put a couple of asterisks next to these Silver Anniversary designations.

The original FEEFHS constitution and bylaws were established 25 years ago in 1993, but the organization actually began the year before, when a small group of leading genealogists, linguists, and other specialists with East European expertise and diverse ethnic, religious, and national backgrounds met in Seattle, Washington on June 28-29, 1992. They decided to establish the Federation of East European Family History Societies, "to facilitate the exchange of information among all organizations, institutions, and individuals interested in researching ancestors in East Europe."¹ At that meeting, they organized a provisional Executive Committee with Charles M. Hall, president, Ed Brandt, 1st vice-president, Brian J. Lenius, 2nd vice-president, and John D. Movies, 3rd vice-president.

At that time, the recent collapse of the Iron Curtain had created new opportunities for working with Eastern European records, previously unknown or inaccessible to the genealogical

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founders of FEEFHS recognized the need for a support organization to foster the creation and development of individual societies, promote interaction between societies for mutual benefit, and advance the field of Eastern European genealogy research in general. Existing genealogical umbrella organizations served primarily North American and British Isles interest groups. The same kind of support organization was needed for the Eastern European genealogy. FEEFHS was created as a federation to meet that need.

By the end of 1992, eleven societies embraced the concept of FEEFHS as founding members. The number of FEEFHS' member organizations doubled each year for several years after its founding, eventually reaching hundreds of member societies. By bringing together people with similar interests, FEEFHS helped inspire the creation of several new organizations, including the German Galizien Descendants and the Silesian American Genealogical Society.

The internet was then in its infant stages and FEEFHS became one of the earliest genealogical organizations to establish a presence on the web in May 1995. The Feefhs.org domain was introduced in the spring of 1996. Feefhs.org was one of the earliest genealogy web portals and featured the first online Eastern European map collection for genealogical use. It has provided web space and links to organizational and individual member pages and other resources. The FEEFHS website has served as an incubator of sorts, providing an Internet presence for dozens of societies until they were able to start their own sites. The site has received several awards over the years, and was recognized in the first New York Times article on web-based genealogical research.

FEEFHS hosted its first annual convention in Salt Lake City, Utah May 14-16, 1994 and has hosted annual conferences there and in various other U.S. and Canadian cities through the years. While the 2018 conference will be the twenty-fifth, there is an asterisk, because two conferences were held in 1995 and none in 1998. (There was also an additional workshop on finding immigrant ancestors in 2013.)

FEEFHS began a quarterly newsletter in October 1992. By 1998 that publication had evolved into a respected professional genealogy journal, which continued another decade of publication until 2008. Since then, FEEFHS has used the web site, social media, and this electronic newsletter to continue to provide research articles, news, and information about resources and events relative to Eastern and Central European family history.

Over time, as member societies gained strength and developed an independent web presence, the need for an umbrella organization to support East European societies diminished. However, interest in Eastern and Central European genealogical studies has continued to grow and FEEFHS has continued to offer rich learning opportunities and information about resources through its conferences, web site, and other offerings.

In 2014, under the direction of current President, Thomas K. Edlund, FEEFHS changed its name to the Foundation for East European Family History Studies with a continuing mission to promote genealogical research in Eastern and Central Europe without ethnic, religious, or social distinctions. FEEFHS defines Eastern Europe in the most inclusive sense, taking into

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We hope you will visit our website at feefhs.org to learn more and discover information and resources to help you in your research. Look for more feature articles to come in FEEFHS News emails this year, highlighting various aspects of the history of the organization, including a history of the web site, FEEFHS publications, annual conferences, and FEEFHS volunteers, past and present. And we we hope you will join us at our [25th Annual Conference](#) in August.

1. FEEFHS: Newsletter of the East European Family History Societies, vol. 1, no. 1, October 1992, p. 1

FamilySearch Community Pages



FamilySearch has soft-launched a new FamilySearch Community that includes niche genealogy research groups for many geographic areas, including a European Genealogy Group, and Germanic Groups for the German Empire, Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Swiss research. To participate in these groups, go to the [FamilySearch Community](#) page and click on Groups. Then search for groups using terms like "Europe," "Germany" or "Hungary." You will need to sign in with a free FamilySearch account.

2019 IGGP Conference



The International German Genealogy Partnership will hold its second international conference, June 15-17, 2019 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Sacramento, California. A call for presentations will be live April 2, 2018. They are looking for experienced presenters in ethnic German

For information about other upcoming related to East European family history, see the FEEFHS Related Events page.

FEEFHS 2018 25th Anniversary Conference

We invite you to join us for next year's [FEEFHS Conference, August 6-10, 2018](#). Celebrate FEEFHS 25th anniversary with us and learn from the experts in Slavic, Germanic, and other aspects of East European Genealogy. The conference venue is located right next door to the world famous Family History Library in Salt Lake City.



The Foundation for East European
Family History Studies (FEEFHS)

25th Annual
East European Research Conference
August 6-10, 2018
Plaza Hotel, Salt Lake City, Utah

Featuring:
Nationally recognized speakers and specialists
Individual Consultations
Research at the nearby Family History Library

Tracks and Classes
German Research
Baltic States Research
Polish Research
Kingdom of Hungary
Russian Research
Germans-from-Russia
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including early-bird registration information, hotel details, and more.

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