

In Memory of Bill Edwin Biar
July 7, 1919 - October 30, 2012



Bill Biar's Wendish credentials are impeccable. Bill is a fourth generation Wend and all eight of his grandparents were Wends. Biar, Moehle, Moerbe, Dube, Michalk, Hattas, Kieschnick, and Zieschang are all surnames in his list of ancestors. He is an example of what one would call "Stockwendish."

Bill grew up in Thorndale, Texas and attended St Paul Lutheran Church and School. He served in World War II and was an accountant for the Atlantic Richfield Oil Company. Throughout his life his greatest treasure was his faith in his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He expressed it in many ways. One way was that he wrote new texts for 40 familiar hymns set to traditional Lutheran music that are being reviewed at Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri.

A member of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society since 1975, Bill helped build the collection of Wendish resources we now employ in our library. The pursuit of his Wendish roots began in the 1970's when he wrote letters to German pastors and traveled to what was then East Germany to interview distant relatives. His family history includes not only names and dates but delves into the historical setting and definitions of the Old World titles and terms. You can find much of his work as well as his life story on his blog "Stockwendish" at the Wendish Research Exchange website. His major contribution to Wendish history and knowledge is the translation of many early Wendish and German documents and letters. These translations became part of "Texas Wends: Letters and Documents" and are available to view at the Wendish museum library. One of his final acts was to collect the materials he amassed and donate them to the TWHS Museum.

Bill will be remembered primarily for his personal traits. He was gracious, generous, amiable, and helpful. But especially he possessed a set of Christian principles formulated in his devout family and honed by his spiritual training that served as the gyroscope of his life.

Because Bill exemplified all the traits and characteristics that are at the foundation of the Wendish Research Exchange of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society, we hope that they might be an inspiration for us all, and it is for this reason that we dedicate this first Wendish History and Knowledge Extravaganza to his memory. We hope that Bill will be remembered, along with Anna Blasig and Lillie Moerbe Caldwell, among the first of the modern advocates and promoters of all things Texas Wendish.

Dr. George Nielsen
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