

A column by Lee Lawyer with stories about geophysics and geophysicists

This is a test! Do you know where Swabia is? Turns out that I am a Swabian. Well, not quite. Actually, I am a direct descendant of a Swabian. Württemberg is probably the correct name for this area, but being a Swabian sounds better than being a Württemberger. It is in the extreme south of Germany, contiguous with Bavaria and Switzerland. Gerhard Keppner tells me that Swabians suffer from the stigma of being extremely industrious. "Schaffe, schaffe Häusle baue" is their motto. Describes me perfectly, don't you think?



My ancestor's given name was Leonhard and, interestingly, there is a school in the town where he was born called St. Leonhard. Coincidence? Maybe. Gerhard reminds me that geophysics is rooted in Germany. Consider the names Karcher, Hasemann, Eckhardt, Riecker, Gutenberg and others. Karcher, Hasemann, and Eckhardt clearly had family names indicative of German ancestry but were they Swabians?

SEG recognizes several people each year for their contributions to our profession. Aubra Tilley wrote a *TLE* article ("Lest we forget") in 1999 and started much earlier than those names mentioned by Gerhard. The lodestone was discovered around 500 BCE but the torsion balance was not developed until much later by Coulomb. Volta made the first battery and Orsted and Ampere developed the foundations of electrodynamics. We all know Fourier and his concepts started in the early 1800s. One can't skip Ohm and Gauss. Then there are chaps named Hertz and Marconi. I can't go through all of the people and the important developments mentioned by Aub. The question is how many were Swabians? And am I related to them?

I hope you know that I am kidding about being related to those notables. But I am always interested in the "genealogy of exploration geophysics." I may be biased toward Karcher, Hasemann, Eckhardt, and DeGolyer, all connected to the University of Oklahoma. Their efforts started in the early 1920s as far as geophysical exploration is concerned. Mintrop was making artificial earthquakes back in 1908 (pictured and discussed in December 2006 FTOS).

March 07

From Gerhard Keppner,

Bettye Athanasiou was well known by our older SEG-convention travelers. They all sing her praises, for Bettye stood not only for public relations but even more for cordial relations. *GeoSpace's Time Break* issues were eagerly read at Prakla (some copies survived in my filing system, but I have problems finding them when needed). Especially the cartoons were appreciated. "A shotpoint is a shotpoint," says a doodlebugger while drilling through the concrete of a highway. Others were glad to work in a swamp, surrounded by snakes and other hostile animals and were happy that the rumor did not come true to work in an icy region ... cabin fever and nightmares ... By the way, can drillers claim the title of "doodlebugger"?

Thanks for the note, Gerhard. I agree with your assessment of Bettye's contributions to our well being. Regarding your question on qualifications, I think that drillers, driller helpers, juggies, surveyors, observers, and a few geophysicists can honestly claim the title "doodlebugger." The office guys have a twinge of conscience when applying the title to themselves, but I think we all should be anointed with that name. We should probably keep it a secret society, where higher education is not a litmus test for membership. Call it the Society of Exploration Doodlebuggers (SED), where everyone is an Active Member!

April 07