

History of Seimeny [Seimental]

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[Note: A brief overview of how the colony of Seimeny [Seimental], Bessarabia came into existence, people who settled it, and what progress it made up to 1927.]

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[Begin Translation]

Colony Seimeny [Seimental]

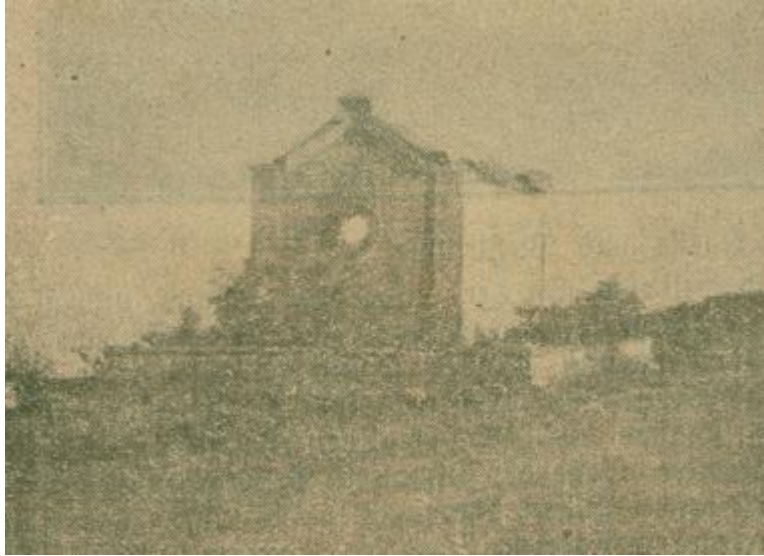
From the Village History by Joh. Mayer

Prompted by the editorial staff of our Bessarabian newspaper, I decided to write a description of Seimeny for the 1927 *Kalender*. But before I continue with the individual reports of the community, its establishments, and so forth, I want to let the readers of the *Kalender* get a look, through the assistance of the Village Chronicle, into the past of the colony and of the whole area



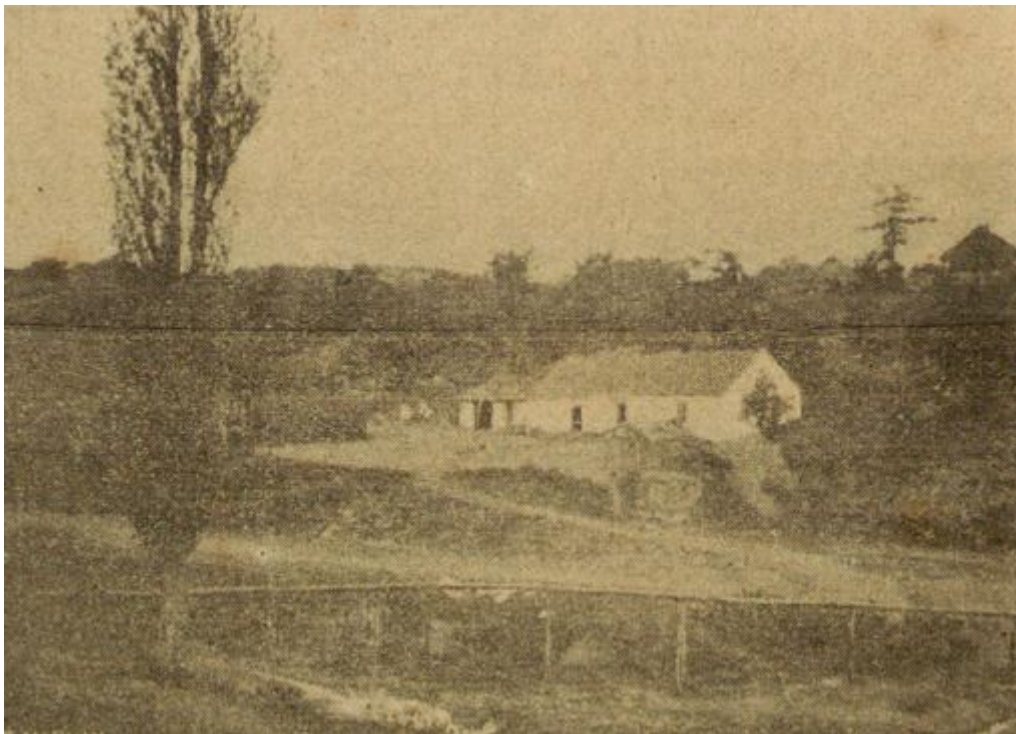
Partial View of Seimeny village

which was formerly known as Budjak. After incorporation of the Province (Область) of Bessarabia, also known as Budjak, to Russia, a commission surveyed the land into sections (участки). One such section of 6,000 *Dessiatine* [1 dessiatine=2.7 acres; =1.09 hectares], Number 26, was given by the Russian Government as the exclusive property to the effective State Council K.J. Bulgakow. This section Number 26 included the two present-day steps of Seimeny and Eigenheim. State Council Bulgakov had many residential (*Wohnplätze*) compounds (*Chuterplätze*) on his land such as: Wisir, Brussow, Benklinow, Rosmarin, Gadschi, Vailik, Dschambulja, Worda and Losan.



Chapel of Prince Wolkonsky

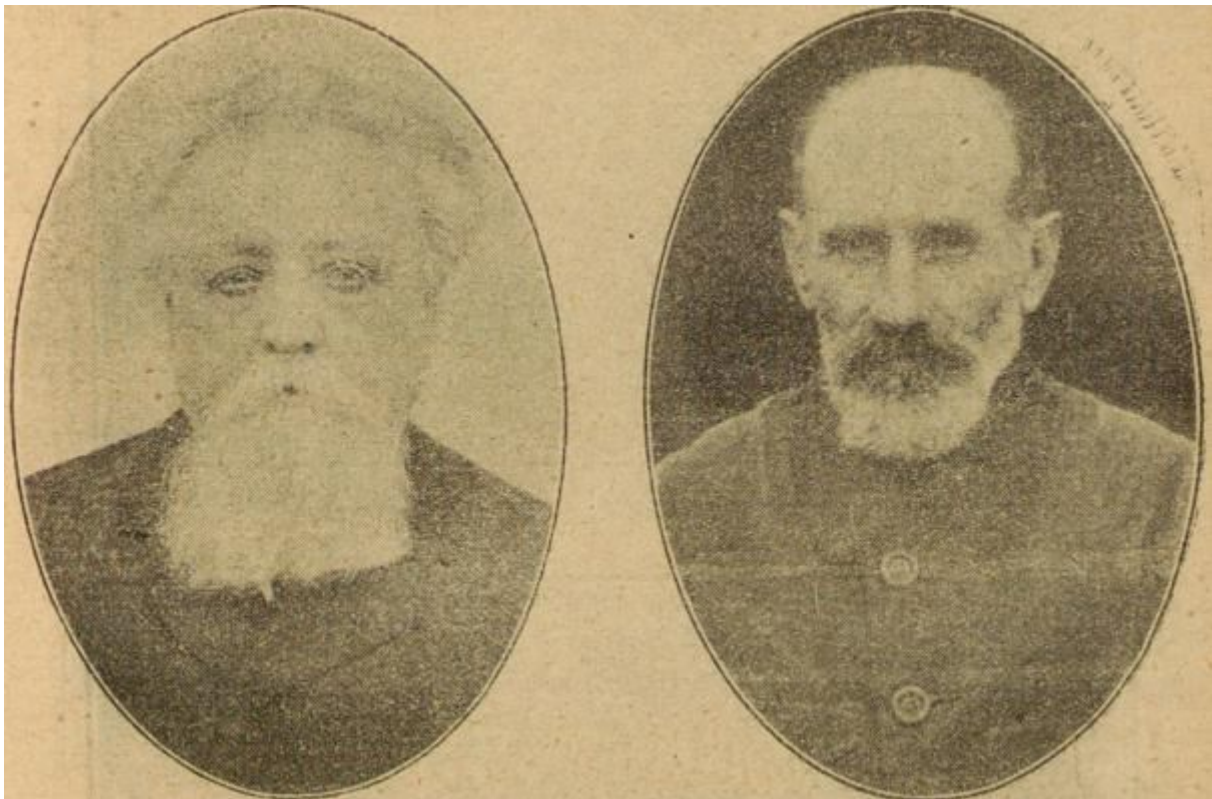
The estate of Seimeny, 3,112 dessiatine large, later became the property of the rich and powerful General Marino, who had his residence here in the large flat-land near the Dnjester estuary (*Liman*). For protection in the still uncertain Province, he was also given a garrison of Cossacks. Marino had acquired sixty thousand dessiatine of land, from Seimeny westward as far as to Eigenfeld. He claimed to have the largest sheep-rearing place; hiring a colonist from Alexanderhilf, Michael Biedermann, as sheep boss (*Schafmeister*) and, as a supervisor or manager, Franz Fetzer from Neuberg. Then Marino brought in onto his estates horse breeder



Spring and Cattle Watering Site

Negro, who came from the distant steppes of General Tabuni, known as horse wild slopes (*Pferdewildhalden*). What was in earlier times a nest of robbers near Friedensfeld, became known as the Russian Village of Negrowo, named after this renter Negro. The sheep breeder was Staroradow, whose sons Anany and Georgy continued to graze their flocks of sheep near Friedensfeld in later years. In the vicinity of the estuary (*Liman*), not far from the farming area of the heirs of G. Schulz, what was at one time a tavern, a famous den for horse thieves and robbers, where the thief brought his goods or where he made off with them. Because the two colonies of Alexanderhilf and Neuburg, each with only 48 dessiatine of farmland, and should still have received the missing 12 dessiatine from this side of the estuary in Bessarabia, but which they either could not or did not want to settle, the Russian government then donated the estate. But both of the above two men, Michael Biedermann and Franz Fetzer, came across as scouts; Biedermann stayed as sheep-boss, like Jacob near Laban, and Fetzer as the overseer of General Marino's business, sheep farm, water mills and fish spawn.

In 1864, after the dissolution of the feudal serfs system, much of General Marino's land went to Russian farmers—tzarists (*Zarane*)—as property ownership changed hands, so it was with Zaritschanka, Reiljanka, Molodowa and Negrovo. He sold the land that was left over—Eigenheim already before 1861—Eigenfeld and Gnadenfeld in 1880. The estate of Seimeny was acquired by a Princess of Wolkonskoja for her son, who was an imperial tutor and privy councillor, but was banished by Emperor Alexander II, because he had taken part (*Dezembrist*) in the conspiracy in December 1863 by whom the kingdom was to have been granted a constitution. Prince Wolkonsky lived in Seimeny under strict Cossack guard until he was freed by Emperor Alexander III according to the manifest.

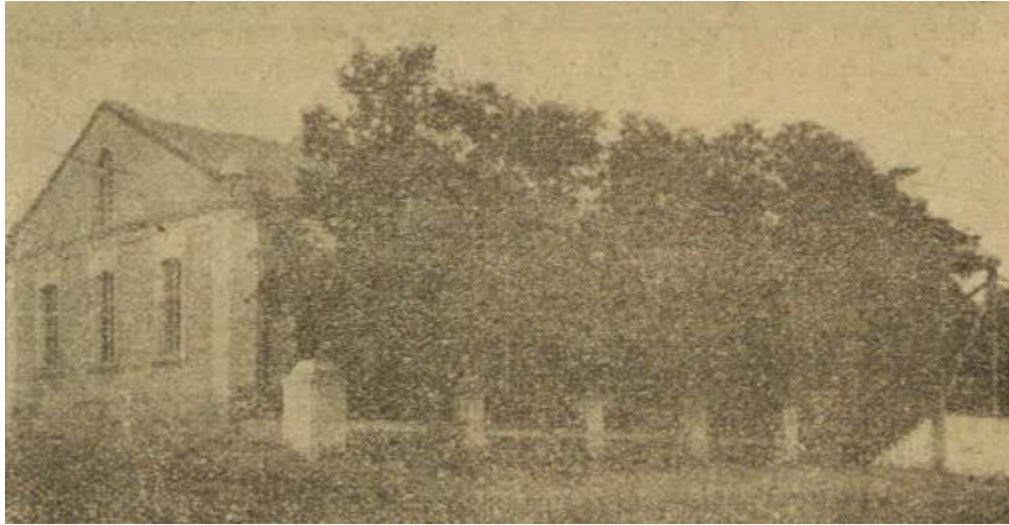


Jakob Koch while Sexton/Teacher at Seimeny

Sexton/Teacher Joh. Mayer, author of the village chronicle

In 1867, Prince Wolkonsky leased the Estate of Seimeny to German colonists from Cherson and Bessarabia. On the banks of the estuary, also called Obriwy, there are the princely buildings of a castle, prison, barracks, and a chapel.

The first renters and founders of the colony were: (1) From Alexanderhilf: Philipp Schentz, Adam Bissart, Heinrich Schüler, Heinrich Schenk, Jakob Mahler, Peter and Philipp Meintzer, Konrad Uhl, Johann Speeh, Jakob Pfau, Vinzens Mayer (my father), Friedrich Kaiser, Johann and Ludwig Tornow, Philipp Dorrmaier. (2) From Neuburg: Peter and Johan Schneider, Christian Litz, Andreas Hirning, Jakob Meile, Jakob and Friedrich Schneider, Gottlieb and



Prayer/School House



Sexton's Residence

Philipp Jergentz, Christian Anderst, Friedrich and Gottfried Harsch, Johann and Johannes Fetzer, Heinrich and Franz Fetzer. (3) From Friedenstal: Johannes Jahnke, Friedrich Walter, Johann

Heine and Jakob Humann. (4) From Alt-Arzis: Michael Dux, Christian Weiss. (5) From Brienne: Johann Adolf, Jakob Schweigert, Matthias and Heinrich Mehl. (6) From Neu-Arzis: Georg Hirsch, Christoph Müller, Gottlieb Trefs. (7) From Alt-Elft: Gottfried Stach. (8) From Gnadental: Christian Traub. (9) From Kulm: August and Ferdinand Schulz, Gottfried Leischner. (10) From Teplitz: Jakob Haisch, Leopold Budfink, Samuel Kludt. (11) From Dennewitz: Gottlieb and Emanuel Böpple, Friedrich Müller. (12) From Colony. Schabo: Friedrich Jundt.

These founders and tenants of the Seimental Colony paid two rubles per dessiatine rent a year for twelve long years, and, for another 15 years, already six and eight rubles per dessiatine up until 1894. Over the course of these 27 years, many of the tenants emigrated to America, many moved back in their mother colonies, and still others have purchased their own land. The first teacher at the founding of the village was Rudolf Lange; those following as teachers and, at the same time, secretaries were: Baumann, Schwarzmann, Eckert (still lives in Posttal), Koch, Kehrer and other less regular and circumspect leaders and advisors of the municipality. The previous owner of Seimeny, Marino, had a master builder, General—Lieutenant a. D. de Buerno, who received a villa and around 35 dessiatine of land by the estuary as a godfather gift for his daughter. This villa, in addition to the land, contained: Schesterikow, Kullbaba, Kampioni and now Reikof. The first three years of renting, from 1867-1869, were total crop failures, so much

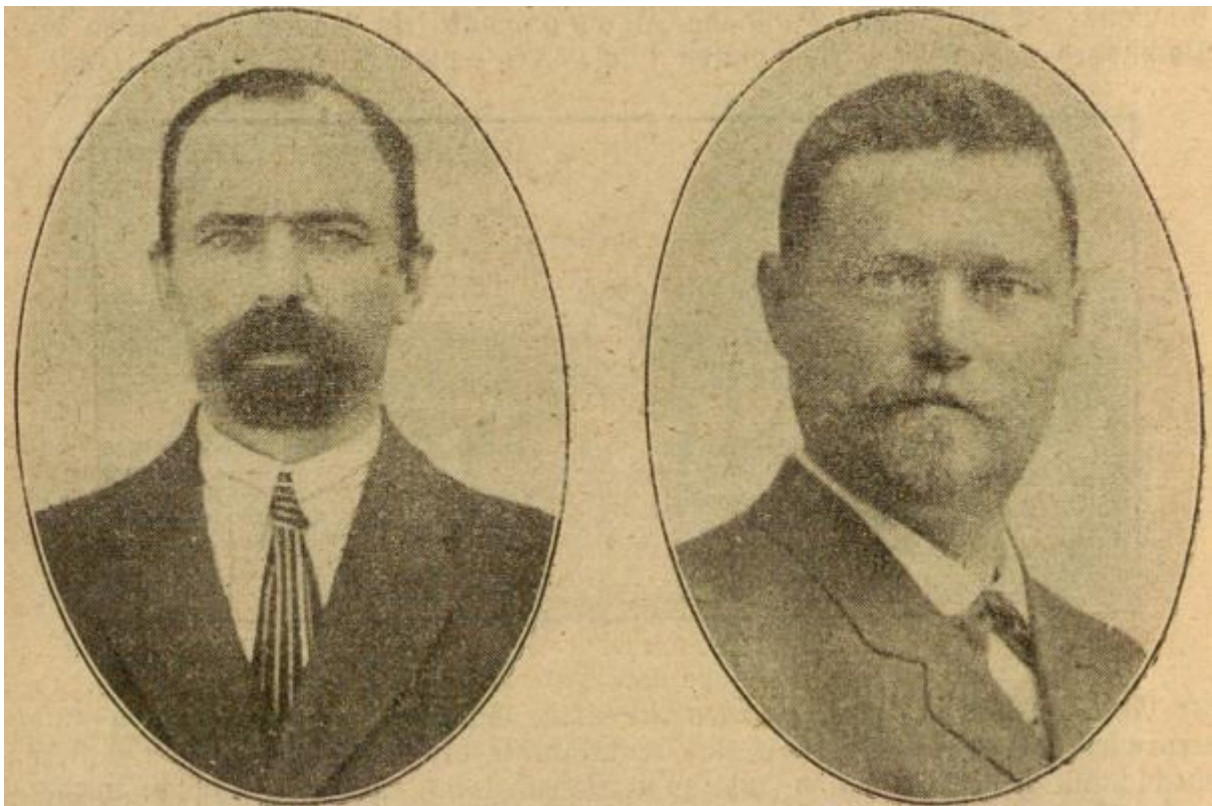


Farmyard of Chr. Mayer I.

so that the courage of the renters faltered because they could not build, they had to go into debt and impoverish themselves, until 1870 produced a bountiful harvest. On average, more good harvests followed until 1892, when the renters once again suffered huge distress, so much so that the district (*Landschaft*) had to assist by giving money, goods and bread, thanks to the mediation and effort of the unforgettable Pastor Golwer.

Prince Wolkonsky was dead by now and the Lady of the Seimeny territory was his widow, a Hungarian by birth, a former maid of the Prince. She harassed, squeezed the renters, and seized their harvest in 1893. She also took delivery of the 1894 harvest at a ridiculously low price (45 kopeks for a *Pud* of barley) [1 pud=36 lbs. =16.38 kg] as payment of the rent arrears. Then Mr. Fassert and Mr. Föhl in Akkermann stepped in on behalf of the municipality, paid the Princess and took over the harvest of the renters at market price. The end of the renters of Seimeny was bad.

In the autumn of 1894, Princess Lydia Wolkonskoya sold the land along with the village of Seimeny to the well-known land buyer Gottfried Schulz in Posttal for 10 rubles per dessiatine. Once again, there were buyers from many villages in Bessarabia and Cherson. Buyers for Seimeny Colony specifically were as follows: Johannes Fetzer, H. Baumgärtner, J. Radke, G. Springer, J. Rivinius, K. Mayer, A. Metzger, J. Falkenberg, F. Schimke, J. Mayer I., E. Roduner, M. Biedermann, M. Kühn, A. Bissart, G. Janke, E. Hirning, B. Mayer, Chr. Gaugel, A. Geweiler, Chr. Ensminger, Chr. Seib, Joh. Schenk, Chr. Schulz, G. Herrmann, M. Höhn, D. Schulz, L. Graumann, L. Härter, H. Schüler, E. Göhring, H. Höhn, Chr. Göhring, J. Kreis, F. Mutschler, G. Klettke, E. Jundt, F. Mayer, J. Blum, J. Mayer II., J. Diehl, F. Brost, G. Schulz, F. Flöther, D. Schimke, F. Büber, Chr. Büber, D. Koth, F. Baumgärtner, J. Koch, Ph. Schüler, A. Stohler, W. Flöther, W. Stoß, D. Machau, J. Fetzer. Today, the colony has 54 landowners with 2,616 dessiatine, 74 yards and around 500 souls. Out of the whole estate, former local pastor Golwer bought 12 dessiatine, the district (*Landschaft*) bought 6 for a nursery school, Gottl. Schulz bought 234, and the wife of Markotsch bought 116 dessiatine. The first teacher of their own community, esteemed and respected by old and young, was old Jakob Koch, 1894-96; the second teacher was Joh. Mayer, 1897-1907; and the third and current teacher is Joh. Heer.



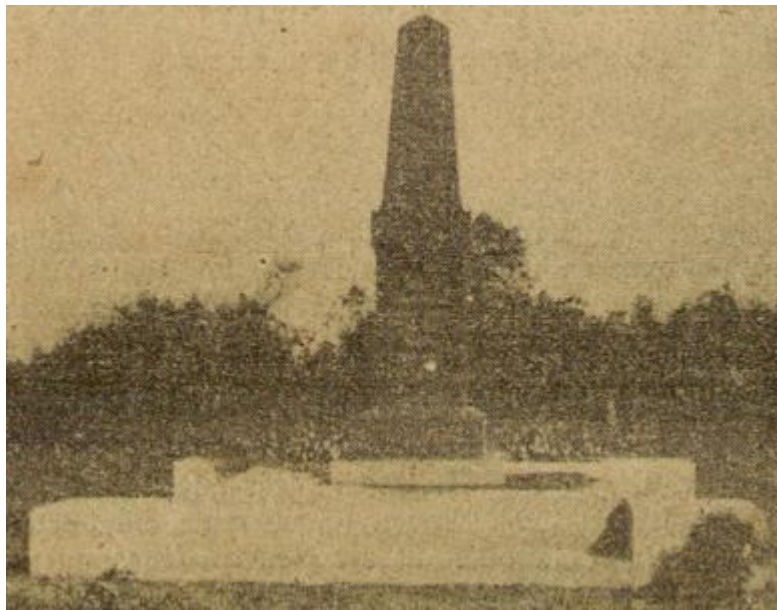
Sexton/Teacher Johann Heer, who, on 24 May, 1926, celebrated his 25th anniversary as a teacher.

Senior Mayor Wilhelm Keck

In 1908, the new spacious chapel with a separate school was built and cost 8,000 rubles. The sexton's residence was built in 1909. Seimeny Colony was one of the best German colonies in its own area up to the World War. It had an advantageous location by the estuary (*Liman*), a flat steppe, good soil, an excellent livestock watering place from a strong spring, and the estuary

itself, on which, in good years, steam-tugs brought the grain to the market in Odessa at the best prices. The population is, so to say, predisposed to progress. We have 100 schoolchildren in 2 schools, two skilled teachers, a youth club, music club, women's club, a clubhouse (community magazine) for theatre performances and kids nights, so that one could almost ask: "My dear, what more do you want?"

However, after the terrible war, the village of Seimeny has become "a servant girl for everything." It is now right on the border of the Romania frontier. Every officer from the police, military civil, custom, security check, and tax authority, who comes through Seimeny, must be billeted, lodged, transported further on, often even picked up. The border guard, the regiment, the rural police, and so forth, due to their low pay, must be supplied with fodder, firewood, and bread. In order to avoid selling the grain at too low a price to speculators, the farmer has to haul it all the way to Kilia. That is where things stand in Seimeny Colony in economic terms. As for intellectual matters, on the more positive side, progress can be noted: our sons and daughters are attending high school (*Hochschule*), secondary school (*Gymnasium*), and central school (*Zentralschule*). So we ought not to be anxious, we have a good future.



War Memorial

Since 1917, the colony of Seimeny had an association which did not "move forward," but, thanks to the German Agreement, meant things "moved backwards." A church cemetery is adorned with a beautiful War Memorial that cost 8,000 lei, which was realized through a collection. The memorial includes the words on the front: "Honor the memory of our dead from the World War 1914-1917." On both sides are the 9 names of the heroes who died or were lost during the war. From the 54 established independent colonies, in the course of 32 years of existence, many folks have gone on to the Great Army [eternity], several emigrated and only a few are still here, but despite that, the community has plotted new lots (54), 10 of which have already been built upon. As I also mention that the municipality of Seimeny is the seat of its municipal administration (*Komunalverwaltung*), has its own pastor in the Andrejewka Parish (Pastor Kern), a small village

library and still more which can bring us culturally and nationally upward and forwards, so I have now arrived at the end of my exposition.

May the community always have efficient leaders, rich in insight and experience, and may they always stand together and be loyal to their leaders in harmony and love.

[End Translation]