I am what they call part of the “Baby-Boomer” generation. As a child in the sixty’s and early seventies, there was at least one wedding every summer, sometimes two. With fifty-some cousins it was not surprising we were always attending a wedding. The wedding Mass was usually on a Friday or Saturday afternoon, compared to a Tuesday morning when my parents were married back in 1953. After Mass we all headed out to the Knights of Columbus building that was on Cody street or the VFW or the American Legion for the meal and dance.

The German weddings meals in Ellis County, when I grew up were usually all the same, wedding roast, mashed potatoes and gravy, chicken and noodles, vegetables, bread and of course wedding cake. After the meal, all the tables were cleaned off and the band would begin to tune up. Bands like The ‘Dutchmasters” and The Herrmanettes” were usually on board to provide the music.

Before the dance began there was a Volga German traditional of singing the “Dusch” or “Die Braut Lied”, the Bride’s Song, in front of the band to the bride and groom. Many of the older generation knew this song by heart, for those that didn’t know it, little cards with the words printed on it were passed out. A copy of the song is to the right.

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Russian German Traditions

The “Dusch” or Braut Lied

By Kevin Rupp

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The Braut Lied or “Brides song is probably our most popular and most loved folksong. It is sung as a toast to the bride and groom just before the wedding march begins. Not uncommonly, some of the relatives shed a few tears because the song is so meaningful. We sometimes call it the Queen of all our folksongs. Unfortunately, you don’t hear this as much as you used to because of the disappearance of the live polka bands to a disk-jockey.

Another custom was the serving of baloney sandwiches and pickles during the intermission to all the guests. My wife, Joyce, and I did this custom at our wedding. I think this was used as a way to get some food into those who may have been drinking a little too much during the evening.

One thing that you don’t see anymore is the long “stricie” pinned to the groom. This was to represent longevity to the marriage. The longer the “stricie” the longer the marriage. It is sad to see these traditions of our forefathers die out.