

Ortsfamilienbücher on Genealogy.net

Germany “How to” Guide, Intermediate Level: Instruction

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GOAL

This guide will teach you to locate and navigate online village lineage books for many German localities available at www.genealogy.net (also found at www.compgen.de).

INTRODUCTION

In Germany, many people have researched the genealogies of entire villages; in German, they are known as *Ortsippenbücher* or *Ortsfamilienbücher* (abbreviated as OFBs). These genealogies can be very helpful in helping you to find your ancestors when these books are available. Some of these OFBs are in published book format, while others are available digitally and found online. This lesson will give instruction on the use of those found at the website www.genealogy.net.

HOW TO

The following notes will help you in using OFBs:

- Dates are written in German format, not American format. This means that the day of the month comes first, followed by the month, which is followed by the year. Thus, the date 04.01.1864 is 4 January 1864, not 1 April 1864.
- The OFBs use symbols to identify births, marriages, and deaths. The following table shows the symbols most often used in OFBs, whether online or in print form:

*	birth or christening
oo	marriage
o/o	divorce
+	death

Using OFBs at Genealogy.net

1. Once you are familiar with how OFBs work, please go to the website www.genealogy.net. The page will automatically transfer you to the home page at <http://compgen.de>.
2. You will see a yellow bar running across the top of the page. This bar contains the different types of databases available on the website. Click on the link called “OFBs”.
3. Here you will find an alphabetical list of all the OFBs available at this site organized by geographical region, as well as a map of Europe with hundreds of red location markers.

Look in left side bar for the phrase “Alphabetische Liste”, and click on it. This shows the full list of OFBs, arranged alphabetically instead of by region.

4. The German diacritics Ä, ä, Ö, ö, Ü, ü, and ß are all used on this site. This website places the German diacritics after the “regular” alphabet in its alphabetical order. Scroll down till you find the locality called Bärwalde. You will find it after the place name Buxtehude.
5. The columns to the right of Bärwalde are:
 - a. The number of people in the book
 - b. The number of “hits” for this book
 - c. The date of the last update made for this book
6. Click on the location Bärwalde. This entry provides a short history of the village, as well as a list of source material. To the left of the page, find the list of flags and languages and click on “English”. This will show the webpage, including the short history, in English. Note that this translation was entered into the website, rather than an online translation; not all OFBs will contain translations to English or other languages.

NOTE: If you wish to translate the information to English, highlight the sections you’d like translated. Right click anywhere on the blue words, and select “Copy”. In a new browser tab, go to a translation website such as <http://translate.google.com>, and paste the selection into the translation box.

7. Above the international flags, you will see the heading “Features” (in German: “Funktionen”). Here you will see three sub-headings:
 - a. Complete List of Surnames (“Gesamtliste der Familiennamen”)
 - b. Birthplaces Foreigners (“Geburtsorte auswärtiger Personen”)
 - c. Places of Death of Emigrants (“Sterbeorte weggezogener Personen”)

Click on the first one labeled “Complete List of Surnames” (“Gesamtliste der Familiennamen”).

8. Here you will find names starting with the letter A, as well as the alphabet. You can choose the appropriate letter which is the first letter of the last name you are searching for. Or you can click on “All” (or “Alle”) to see all surnames listed.
9. Let’s search for the name Albert Gluth. You should click on the letter “G”, and then the surname “Gluth”. Albert is the first name which appears.
10. Click on Albert Gluth. You should see a page like this one:

Ortsfamilienbuch Bärwalde (Kreis Neustettin) Familienbericht	
♂ Albert GLUTH	
Bemerkungen:(notes) Info: 1933 als Schuhmacher wohnhaft in Bärwalde,Bahnhofstr. 79	
Familien (families)	Kinder (children)
Keine Familie gefunden! (No family found!)	Keine Kinder gefunden! (No children found!)
Eltern (parents)	Geschwister (siblings)
Quellen:(sources)	

Source: <http://ofb.genealogy.net/famreport.php?ofb=baerwalde&ID=16871&nachname=GLUTH&modus=&lang=de>, accessed 12 January 2016.

11. The entry for Albert Gluth provides the following information:

In 1933 he was a shoemaker living in Bärwalde at Bahnhof Street #79.
No family was found – No children were found
Unfortunately there was little to learn about Albert, except that he did live in Bärwalde.

12. Return to the Gluth family by using the back arrow on the webpage. This time, choose Maria Christina Therese Gluth. Here is her entry:

Ortsfamilienbuch Bärwalde (Kreis Neustettin) Familienbericht	
♀ Maria Christina Therese GLUTH	
* 1855 in Bärwalde, Kreis Neustettin / Pommern	
Bemerkungen:(notes)	
Familien (families)	Kinder (children)
1.Ehegatte: ♂ August Wilhelm Bogislaw GörGS (1st spouse) * 1851 in Bärwalde, Kreis Neustettin / Pommern oo 02.07.1875 in Bärwalde, Kreis Neustettin / Pommern	♂ August Wilhelm Bogislaw GörGS * 1875 in Bärwalde, Kreis Neustettin / Pommern ♂ Wilhelm Gustav Paul GörGS * 1876 in Bärwalde, Kreis Neustettin / Pommern ♂ Paul Julius Wilhelm GörGS * 1877 in Bärwalde, Kreis Neustettin / Pommern, + 1878 in Bärwalde, Kreis Neustettin / Pommern ♀ Agnes Margarethe Louise GörGS * 1878 in Bärwalde, Kreis Neustettin / Pommern
Bemerkungen:(notes)	
Eltern (parents)	Geschwister (siblings)
Vater: ♂ Carl Gottfried Ferdinand GLUTH (father) * 1827	♀ Henriette Christina Pauline GLUTH * 1853 in Bärwalde, Kreis Neustettin / Pommern
Mutter: ♀ Wilhelmine Christine MALLON (mother)	
Quellen:(sources)	

Source: <http://ofb.genealogy.net/famreport.php?ofb=baerwalde&ID=12143&nachname=GLUTH&modus=&lang=de>, accessed 12 January 2016.

This entry shows that Maria Christina Therese was born (*) in 1855 in Bärwalde. She married (oo) 2 July 1875 in Bärwalde (not 7 February 1875). The name of her husband was August Wilhelm Bogislaw GörGS born (*) 1855 in Bärwalde.

Their children were:

August Wilhelm Bogislaw GörGS born 1875 in Bärwalde
Wilhelm Gustav Paul GörGS born 1876 in Bärwalde
Paul Julius Wilhelm GörGS born 1877 in Bärwalde and died (symbol: +) 1878 in Bärwalde
Agnes Margarethe Louise GörGS born 1878 in Bärwalde

Her parents were:

Carl Gottfried Ferdinand Gluth born 1827
Wilhelmine Christine Mallon (no further information)

Her only known sibling was:
Henriette Christina Pauline Gluth born 1853 in Bärwalde.

Each name is clickable, showing that person as the central individual, and listing any available information on spouse, children, parents, and siblings.

Further training on *Ortsfamilienbücher*

There are many other features that are available at this site. There is a 35-minute free webinar available that will teach some of the capabilities that are available on this website. The additional information taught on the webinar can help you more fully use the website.

If you are viewing this “How to” Guide online, click [here](#). If you are viewing this “How to” Guide in printed form, follow these steps:

- Go to FamilySearch’s homepage at www.familysearch.org.
- Click on “Search”, then click on “Wiki”, found in the second menu bar from the top of the page.
- In the search box, type in the word “Webinar” and press the “Enter” key.
- Click on the article called “Family History Library Classes and Webinars”. You will see a table of contents.
- Look through the table of contents and find, then click on the line “2.3.2 Germany”. This will take you to the section dealing with German webinars.
- Click on the webinar called “German Research Series Using Genealogy.net”.

When you have found the webinar, go to position 44:29 on the bottom scroll bar to view the presentation on the *Ortsfamilienbücher* and how to use them. The end of the webinar will be found around the 1:20:00 mark.

PRACTICE

Follow along with the steps below to find the date of birth for Anna Sophia Rehbaum using the OFB for Wilhelmshausen.

1. Go to the website www.genealogy.net.
2. Click on OFBs in the yellow tool bar at the top of the page.
3. On the left tool bar, click on “Alphabetische Liste” (“Alphabetical list”).
4. If you scroll down alphabetically to “W”, you will **not** see Wilhelmshausen in the list. This is because the town of Wilhelmshausen is included in the family book of Holzhausen, and is therefore listed under “H”. To find the OFB for Wilhelmshausen, hold down the “Control” key and type “F”. In the search bar that appears in the upper right or lower left

of the screen, type in "Wilhelmshausen". You will see that it is highlighted and follows the location of Holzhausen, because it is part of the same parish book. Click on the name of these towns.

5. You are on the introduction page for this OFB. Notice there is a short history of the parish. On the left side of the screen, under the international flags, click on "English". The website is now in English, but the short history has not been translated into English.

NOTE: If you wanted to translate the history, you would need to click on the German "Deutsch" flag, and follow step 6 above.

6. On the left side bar, again under the heading of "Funktionen" ("Functions") click on "Gesamtliste der Familiennamen" ("Complete List of Surnames").
7. Click on the letter "R", then click on the surname "Rehbaum".
8. You will see a list of all the Rehbaums in this book. You will find Anna Sophia by scrolling down the alphabetical list. Anna Sophia is the 9th name on the list. Her date of birth, 25 February 1767 (shown as 25.02.1767), follows the German symbol of birth which is represented by an asterisk (*). Click on her name.
9. Here you will find the name of her husband, Johannes Henricus Kastrop. You will also see that no children are listed for the couple. Additionally, her parents, Johann Peter Rehbaum and Anna Elisabeth Eberhardt, are listed, as are her eight siblings.

ACTIVITY

Now, test your skills you have learned in this "How to" Guide. The Activity is a way to check your knowledge and let you know you've mastered the Guide! [Click here](#) to try out the Activity.