

Life History of Franz and Helene Kliewer (née Hübert)

Written by daughter Helene Kliewer

Helene Kliewer (née Hübert) was born on November 26, 1922 in the village of Nikolaifeld, Territory of Omsk. She was the last of 14 children in the family of Heinrich and Blandina Hübert. The father died in July of that same year. So my mother became the pet, loved and spoiled by her siblings. In 1926 the family moved to the neighbouring village of Putschkowo. At 7 years of age Mama entered the village school, after which she finished the 7th grade, and then finished her education in Kresstadt.

In 1946 my mother married the friend of her youth, Franz Kliewer (02.07.1918), from Nikolaifeld. I was born on the 7th of October, 1951, after which my parents moved to Margenau, where they were employed as teachers. In addition, Mama kept busy with handwork: she sewed, she knit, she did all kinds of handiwork, and she encouraged me in taking up this kind of art as well, something that worked for her, since by profession I became a tailor. In the meantime, my oldest brother Harry had married and moved to Kazakhstan. In 1969 my parents moved over to the Caucasus, to the village of Nowopoltawskoje. There they built a nice, comfortable house and planted a large fruit garden. And in this village they also continued teaching. But Mother felt a terrible homesickness for children and grandchildren—she made the long journey to loved ones twice or three times a year. She always arrived loaded down.

In Prochladnoje she joined an evangelical church, and became an active member. She took this very seriously. As the fruit garden matured, many villagers shared its bounty, for mother was a cheerful giver.

In 1971 I married Alexander Penner, and soon after we moved to Kazakhstan, where my brother lived. Mama found travel easier now. But with time she began to complain about inner pain. Initially she ignored it, but as it became unbearable Mother finally consulted doctors. She was given a hospital bed in the city of Nalschik, where she underwent two serious operations. Because it was so serious, Papa called both me and Harry. Both of us drove immediately. Mama was overjoyed. On January 4, 1987, just as I was preparing her for her morning visit with the doctor she suddenly sighed deeply and her lifeless head fell to the side. The doctors did their utmost—in vain. Mama died in my arms.