

The namesake of the poem is Anna Neander, the daughter of a parson from Tharau, East Prussia, not far from the old Prussian capital of Königsberg, now in a Russian Baltic enclave and renamed Kaliningrad. The poem was written on the occasion of her marriage in 1636 and had been set to music as a song by 1642.

In my view, this is a most beautiful melody, made even more poignant by the fact of a lost homeland. The poet, Simon Dach, happened to meet Anna on a ferry and was so bowled over by her beauty that he wrote the poem for her later wedding to a local parish pastor.

I've purposely included several different recordings, each of which presents in its own light. Fritz Wunderlich is a tenor, to modern ears perhaps a bit old-fashioned, but what a voice! - a sort of German Mario Lanza!

**From Brian Varley**