



Celebrating our 250th Anniversary throughout 2014!

President's Message

We opened our 250th Anniversary Celebratory year on Sunday, December 29, 2013, with eighty members and friends of the Society. Dr. Friederike Baer gave us an interesting and comprehensive lecture on the early history of the Society and Kile Smith and his family provided a special musical treat for us in our Library. Jackie with her daughters, Nellie and Martina, showcased music selections written in the 1700's playing instruments used at that time.

And after some acknowledgments and recognitions, we all enjoyed a very special social hour in the Ratskeller provided for us by Christiane Schmidt and Maria Sturm with additional support by Jerry Schmidt, AnneMarie Colborn, Maria Neitzel and Jutta Lendvay.

In this issue of the Staatsbote, I would like to share some of my remarks for this special event.

The Society has survived 250 years as the oldest German ethnic society in America, which is quite an achievement that all of us can be very proud of. Let us remember that in 1764 Pennsylvania was still a British colony, King George III sat on the English throne, and

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Building News & More

This fall and winter it became apparent that the Heating and Cooling Systems in our building are not up to their tasks anymore. Maintenance costs are skyrocketing and security of supply is dwindling. By working with a mechanical engineering consultant, it became clear that we must replace most of the existing HVAC systems within the next 12 months. There are major issues (involving substantial cost) that are immediately pressing. However, we should also consider including longer-range improvements, such as air conditioning the Auditorium, in the planning process.

This winter was also not conducive to any progress on the waterproofing project. With only a few workdays without freezing conditions during the past two months, we have suffered delays in the completion of the project. During a rare break in the winter scene, I was able to salvage brownstone panels from a demolition site. This was made possible thanks to a tip by GSP member, Hermann Pfefferkorn, that nearly matching stone might be available on a construction site close to the UPenn campus.

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Chairman's Comments

This past winter has been exceptionally severe – with several havoc wreaking snow and ice storms, causing power outages for many German Society members living in the suburban area of Philadelphia. At our 150-year-old Center City residence, we experienced a water line break and an ice blockage on the roof, causing flooding on several floor levels of the building. At the Society, the abundant snow and ice on the

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Philadelphia was the largest town in the colonies with around 20,000 inhabitants and already a significant German population. We should recall that in the prior year, 1763, at the Treaty of Paris, the French and the English settled the French and Indian War as it was known in America. Canada was ceded by France to Britain. King George III decreed that there should be no white settlements west of the Allegheny Mountains yet Indian wars and skirmishes continued for some time. In 1765 the Stamp Act was enacted as a means to replenish the coffers of King George III depleted by the seven years of war and of course Patrick Henry called for a rebellion – no taxation without representation. And twelve years after the establishment of the Society, in 1776, the American Revolutionary War was very much under way.

I am personally humbled when I think about all the thousands of very loyal members, volunteers – men, women and leaders of the Society - who toiled and donated their skills and financially supported the causes of the Society - to keep it stable and a viable organization for two and half centuries. And today, we are the proud owner of a great and historically important building with its magnificent Library, holding a rich collection of books and manuscripts. But most importantly, we

all benefit from a long and very rich heritage. All of us should be honored and be proud to build on these achievements. It was not easy, especially during and following the two World Wars. In fact the Society's membership dropped significantly during these periods and it took a good number of years to rebuild the depleted ranks. The German migrations to America varied greatly over the past 250 years. It was significant during the mid to late 1800's, increased again in the 1920's and after World War II. This meant the Society had to adjust its services for new immigrants – be that charitable work, offering English lessons or managing an employment agency. Much of the relief efforts were taken over by our Women's Auxiliary after World War I. And of course there were numerous recessions and economic hard times over the past 250 years which also impacted the Society. Early on, the Society focused exclusively on doing real charitable work. By the mid 1800's with many more German speaking immigrants coming to the United States of America for economic opportunities, rather than religious freedom, maintaining the German language became important and the Society established a reading and lending library. As all of you know, in more recent decades the emphasis has been on offering cultural, academic, historic and social experi-

ences with a unique German flavor. We thus hope to be a significant contributor of these experiences in the Philadelphia area.

Enough about the past - what might the future bring? We are less likely to serve the needs of recent German immigrants as has been the practice in the past. There are fewer immigrants coming to the States and most of them are rather self-sufficient. Instead, we need to appeal to much larger audiences – essentially to all who have an interest in German history, German culture and are looking for unique social experiences. This obviously will include German immigrants, their descendants, individuals who lived or extensively travelled or maybe studied in Germany or German speaking countries, as well as the general public. We must cast a broader net and our members need to be our ambassadors. Just imagine what would happen if each member would get a friend to join the organization! A good example of how to increase awareness in the Society might come from this year's Christmas Village experience in Love Park. We had more than 250 attendees visit a booth made available to the Society by Tony Michels. They gave us their personal information including e-mail addresses. Maybe a good and targeted follow-up campaign might results in 20 or 30 new members. Growing our member-

ship needs to be a top priority.

What do we require moving forward? To serve new and established members and visitors we need the following: 1. vibrant and interesting programs that will attract them; 2. a modern and attractive facility; 3. to operate within the economic resources available to us, including a balanced budget, and to make sure that the Society is on a long-term secure financial footing; 4. and last but not least effective management and membership support teams.

I believe we are well positioned to achieve these four long-term goals. Since 2006 we have obtained more than a one million in grants for building improvements, plus generous private donations of \$100,000 each from Hans Trustdorf and Ulrich Both for the Beichl elevator tower. And in the past two years we have built a fledgling Endowment Fund with close to \$500,000 in contributions. Most importantly our programs have grown in recent years and for the 250th Anniversary celebration we will host over forty different events. Please attend as many of these events as you can and bring your friends to the Society.

In summary, we have two important reasons to be excited about our celebratory year. First, it is a unique opportunity to honor the contributions of the past. But most importantly, we should also celebrate the future of the Society.

Many of us will not be around to participate in the tricentennial celebration. I am confident, however, if we continue to seek new members and follow the four point strategic plan described above and continue to build on our past achievements and the relationships we developed, learn from prior experiences or failures if you wish, listen to and be close to our members, that is especially true for our relationship with the Women's Auxiliary, we will have a wonderful celebration in the Horner Library on December 28th in 2064; which again happens to be the Sunday after Christmas.

– Ernie Weiler

Volunteer Opportunity

We would like to bring a unique volunteer opportunity to your attention. We have engaged a professional photographer to take a series of pictures at selected events during 2014. In addition members and friends will be also taking photos at all of the events. Our 250th Anniversary Planning Committee supports the idea that we not only generate a pictorial record for the year, but that we organize the materials so that it will be useful to a number of interested parties. We are looking for one or two volunteers who are familiar with the appropriate software, such as maybe Photoshop or others, and

who can organize and archive the digital pictures and also generate a series of slide shows. If you are interested in such an effort, please call the office.

Endowment Fund Update

As noted in prior communications, to help address long-term funding issues for the Society we have focused on building a vibrant giving program which includes our annual fund drive and most importantly our recently established GSP Endowment Fund. Our long term target is \$5 million and the shorter term goal is \$2 million. We are very close to \$500,000 in donations and commitments, which is great!

We are also happy to report that *nineteen* individuals and families have indicated that the Society is remembered in their wills or estate plans. This is wonderful. If other organizations are a guide, we can expect many of our donations to come from estate plans and wills. If your plans already include the Society, please let us know so that we can add your name to the Linden Society. If not, please give us a call or talk to your accountant or attorney about remembering the Society. There are some very simple ways to do this. Even just a small percentage of an estate will be like a lifeline to the Society.

– Ernie Weiler

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premises has also presented a constant challenge to **Tony Michels** over the past two months. Against all odds, including a shortage of salt, he managed to keep our sidewalks and parking lot in a "safe and passable condition." In mid-February, we did have to cancel two events – a *Konversationsabend* and a *Friday FilmFest* – due to inclement weather.

Despite these harsh weather conditions, there has been a positive trend in attendance of the many events offered as part of our Jubilee celebration this year. Our first three concerts of 2014 may attest to this favorable development: On January 5, we enjoyed a piano recital by the now worldwide acclaimed **Claire Huangci** who dazzled the audience with her virtuosic skills on our Bösendorfer *Konzertflügel*. The quality of that instrument – like a good wine – seems to be improving with age. That was underscored when **Davyd Booth** and **Michael Stairs** delighted us as piano duet-tists with pieces of Bach, Schubert, Delius and some of the latter's compatriots.

And most significantly, our Big Bach Bonanza with the Bethlehem Bach Choir and Orchestra, under the baton of **Greg Funfgeld**, presenting a new, one-act comic opera called "**Young Meister Bach**" composed by **Chuck Holde-**

man in the Baroque era style – along with Johann Sebastian Bach's *Kaffee Kantate* – was a stupendous success! Our auditorium was filled to overflowing – with 50 choristers, 20 musicians and 140 people in attendance, besides four soloists performing on our stage. Musically and acoustically, this concert was outstanding – and so was the staging, acting and singing by the vocalists. Their German articulation in the singing of the cantata was superb, as my resident spousal diction coach confirmed.

Incidentally, if you missed this Philadelphia premiere of "Young Meister Bach", or wish to experience it again, you will have the opportunity early in May, when it is presented as part of the next Bethlehem Bach Festival (see www.bach.org). And if you, too, are an aficionado of J. S. Bach's music, you may want to mark your calendar for a presentation of the **St. John's Passion** – sung in German by the professional Chancel Choir, and accompanied by an orchestra of period instruments – on Good Friday, April 18, 2014 at the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia (see www.fpcphila.org).

Thanks to the generous sponsorship support by the Arcadia Foundation, the Albert & Hete Barthelmes Foundation and Styron LLC, we are advertising our concerts for

the rest of this year, both with 30-second radio spots on WRTI as well as posters on the East and South side of our building (as pictured in the previous issue of our newsletter). For the next three concerts we will host the **Wister Quartet** and **American Virtuosi** – who are both well known to our audience – as well as the **EStrella Piano Duo**, represented by two Russian emigres, Elena Doubovitskaya and Svetlana Belsky, from Chicago. Since Spring is just around the corner, you will not have to contend with nasty weather when making your way to the Society.

Of course, the attendance to our concerts is small when compared with the 700 paid participants of our **Third Annual Bierfest** which **Tony Michels** and **Marnie Old**, Philadelphia's premier beer and wine expert – in a cooperative effort – brought to our premises. We rented the space of the Latvian Society, next door, in order to accommodate that many people, and the weather cooperated as well. The rare mid-afternoon sun allowed the use of our garden. Breathing the relatively warm, but fresh air was a welcome experience when meandering from one locale to the other. Marnie Old, came to us as a "godsend", eight years ago – when we had scheduled our first wine tasting, and the Austrian sommelier whom we had

hired for that event, cancelled on very short notice. She has proven to be a very good partner to us over the years.

Another partner, and good friend of our Society, who is well recognized in his field, is **Chef Walter Staib**, Proprietor of City Tavern, Philadelphia's oldest restaurant dating back to colonial times. For many years, he has been the caterer of choice for our annual *Stiftungsfest*, and this year, he will do so again! Please mark your calendar for **November 22, 2014** when we gather for our **250th Stiftungsfest**. However, you may not have to wait that long if you enjoy colonial cooking, because later this month, on **March 28, 2014** Walter Staib will demonstrate his **Colonial Cooking Expertise** – with food and drink typically served at the time when our Society was founded in 1764 – at the Harriton House in Bryn Mawr. Since space is limited for both events, you may be well advised to make your reservations early.

Another interesting highlight of our sestercentennial jubilee is the historic lecture series presented in our library. In case you may have missed the first two presentations by Drs. Friederike Baer and Randall Donaldson, respectively, I urge you to attend **Professor Overhoff's** March 20th lecture on "**William Penn's Travels in Germany, 1677.**" At that time, Ger-

many was not yet a united country, but part of the Holy Roman Empire. Also, please note, this was four years before Penn founded Pennsylvania, and Philadelphia. I still remember Dr. Overhoff's lecture (and book) eight years ago, on Benjamin Franklin's travel to Germany – when the Age of Enlightenment challenged the former ideas of faith and tradition in Europe. That lecture brought 80 people to our library.

This Spring, we shall also present two plays on our stage: First, on **April 28, 2014 Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *Die Physiker*** in German by the EBS Players from Elmshorn, Germany – a theater group which was formed by graduates from the Elmshorn Gymnasium, several years ago. You may well recognize one or the other actor because they visited us twice before – with renderings of *Der zerbrochene Krug* and *Die Spanische Fliege*. In addition, we will be showing another play on our stage, called **Michael the Rebel**. This is an English adaptation of **Heinrich von Kleist's** 200 year old novella '**Michael Kohlhaas**'. The play tells the true story of peasant insurrection in Germany and the psychological transformation of its leader from ordinary citizen to violent revolutionary, 475 years ago. There will be several performances over the weekend of June 6–8, 2014.

Last but not least, our **Friday FilmFest** – which has been delighting our movie enthusiasts on a monthly basis for more than 15 years now – will come through with a broad spectrum of German classics, such as Thomas Mann's *Confessions of Felix Krull*, *Ludwig II*, *Hannah Arendt*, *Beerland*, *Nikolaikirche* and *Ernst Lubitsch in Berlin*, the latter dating back to the early Babelsberg–Hollywood connection. For further details, please check our Jubilee Calendar of Events. And of course, we will also be showing – on a large screen in our garden – all the German and US soccer matches of the World Cup 2014 in Brazil, from mid June to mid July of this year.

Now that Spring has come upon us, I sincerely hope you will enjoy the diversity of our program offerings.

– Hardy von Auenmueller

P.S. When in Washington this Spring you might enjoy the current exhibition "German Karneval: Then and Now!" This exhibit showcases a cross-section of authentic costumes from the Rheinische Karneval and Alemannische Fastnacht region, as well as vintage regalia from the Koelner Karnevals museum. Custom-tailored hats, ornate medals and handcrafted masks are also on display. Informative panels and videos describe the origins and regional differences of Karneval.

German Society Scholarship Program

One of the important links on our webpage takes readers to the German Society Scholarship Program. These awards are intended to provide financial assistance to selected undergraduate students majoring in German language and literature. Awards are based primarily on the student's achievement and promise, although financial need may also be considered. The average awards in recent years have been about \$2,500, with the dollar amount and number of recipients varying from year to year and scholarships could be as low as \$1,000. We partner with the Women's Auxiliary in this very popular program.

The awards may be applied only to tuition and are transmitted directly to the recipient's college or university upon certification of enrollment by that institution. A number of years ago, Mr. Linke, a benefactor of the Society, provided sufficient funds for us to start this scholarship program. There was one stipulation - only sixty percent of the interest paid could be distributed in any given year and the remaining earnings were to be reinvested. For many years our Finance Committee managed these funds using various Vanguard accounts. More recently we allowed The Philadelphia Foundation to manage these monies,

because of their superior track record. Based on the prior year's investment appreciation and earnings, we are allowed to withdraw variable amount to be used for scholarships. The dollar amounts are adjusted to assure the donors' restrictions are observed.

About mid-March our Scholarship Committee reviews the applications received. Finalists are interviewed and are notified mid-April whether they will receive a scholarship. This year the actual awards will be presented on April 26th in conjunction with the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) Awards Program. Current members of the Scholarship Committee are: Angela Bacher, Thomas Buckley, Jean Godsall-Myers, Bill Heintzelman, Kristina Lengel, Helen Schutz and Hardy von Auenmueller. We thank them for their important work.

This year, we are pleased to acknowledge a generous donation of \$ 1,000 for a special scholarship awarded under our program. This award is made possible by a donation from Ronald Herman Hoess in the honor of his sister Barbara E. Hoess, who was a respected German language teacher at Springfield High School, in Montgomery County, for thirty-five years and

was an active member of the AATG for many years. We are confident that one additional college-bound German student will be thrilled this year by this scholarship. Ron, thank you very much. This is wonderful way to honor your sister.

Our awardees will be listed in the next issue of the Staatsbote.

– Ernie Weiler

Visit to the Library during the ALA Midwinter Meeting

During the last weekend of January, the American Library Association (ALA) held its annual Midwinter Meeting at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Such conferences provide a wonderful opportunity for librarians to attend lectures and seminars, learn about new products from library vendors, and meet like-minded professionals from all over the country. In addition to official Midwinter activities held at and near the Convention Center, a number of off-site events were organized in conjunction with the Meeting, including networking receptions and tours of local cultural institutions. In the weeks leading up to the convention, I learned that the History Section of the Reference & User Services Association (RUSA) wished to organize visits to Philadelphia-area historical sites during the Midwinter weekend. I reached out to the chair of



Guests tour the library as part of the ALA Midwinter Meeting

the History Section, Michelle Baildon, to see if a tour of the German Society's library and archives would be of any interest. Michelle responded enthusiastically to the idea, and over the course of our email conversation, we agreed that the morning of Sunday, January 26th would be ideal for such an event.

Despite the chilly temperatures and abundant snow and ice, we had a great turnout! A couple dozen librarians, archivists, and genealogist from near and far braved the weather to learn more about the German Society. We congregated in the board of directors' room, viewed both the auditorium and the Ratskeller, and ended in the library's reading room. Bettina Hess, Maria Sturm, and Elliott Shore were all kind enough to lend their time and talents to the tour, providing historical commentary and letting in late-

comers. Thanks to everyone who helped organize this event, and I hope to be able to organize a similar tour the next time an ALA conference is in Philadelphia!

– Chrissy Bellizzi, Librarian

PhillyKinder Update

PhillyKinder introduces Book Club: *Leseratten und Lesemäuse*

We have been pleased to offer an exciting addition to PhillyKinder, our program for bilingual children. Since the fall, a kids' book club for 3rd-10th graders has been meeting at Overbrook Presbyterian Church on a bi-weekly basis. The older students are called the *Leseratten* (Reading Rats) and the younger ones the *Lesemäuse* (Reading Mice). Our focus is on introducing our kids to German youth literature, enjoying it together and learning facts about

Germany along the way. We strive to make our program dynamic and full of activities that are diverse and interactive and yet still foster language development. The group is led by two teachers and reading materials are available in both original and easy-read formats, so that kids of different ages and fluency levels can participate equally.

Topic of the year: Discovering Berlin through youth detective novels

Our first book was *Emil und die Detektive*, the 1929 children's classic by Erich Kästner. We took a journey 'back in time' and imagined life before cell phones and busy schedules, when children roamed the city streets unsupervised. By following Emil's footsteps through Berlin, we introduced our students to the highlights of Berlin and explored its different neighborhoods. Our students acquainted themselves with the city's public transport system by working out different routes, e.g. from Emil's grandmother's house in *Schumanstraße* to *Nollendorfplatz*, where the 'detectives' spied on the man who stole Emil's money on the train to Berlin. Also, they practiced asking for directions through role play. While playing *Heisser Stuhl*, one of our favorite games, we brought Emil and the detectives to life. *Heißer Stuhl* (hot chair) is a game, in which a student takes on the role



Litfasssäule created by PhillyKinder's Bookclub

of a character and the group challenges him/her with questions concerning his/her actions, feelings, plans for the future etc. *Darstellendes Spiel* (dramatic play) was and still is a class favorite. The students enjoy playing a character and re-enacting scenes from the book.

At the end, our students created Berlin themed projects. The *Leseratten* designed impressive Powerpoint sightseeing tours of Berlin while the *Lesemäuse* each produced a *Litfasssäule* (old-fashioned advertising pillar) that featured interesting sights and catchy slogans.

To continue our journey through Berlin, we have started reading and discussing *Beschützer der Diebe* by Andreas Steinhöfel. The *Pergamon Museum* and the *Museumsinsel* will be among the new topics we explore.

book into a comic, creating a book cover, making a *Guckloch* (peephole) or creating a *Erzählkarton* (shoe box book report).

The *Guckloch* is a small booklet with a circular hole on the front page. Students illustrate a scene from the book, visible through the "peephole", write a few sentences about the plot and comment on how they liked it.



Book Talks

To kick off the new year, our students presented books they read over winter break through creative projects. The students chose among interviewing a character, turning

ing parts of the

For the *Erzählkarton* the students collect items significant to the story to give a unique and dynamic presentation about their book. This fantastic *Erzählkarton* about "Momo" by Michael Ende was presented by one of our 4th graders (see photo).

The kids took great pride in their work and it was truly a joy to watch them present.

Our book club is a wonderful place for creative young people who love books and who are motivated to practice their German with like-minded peers. We are excited to continue our literary journey with our students and learn more about their creativity and interests as the class progresses.

– Sonja Srama-Souder
and Birgit Splitt

Annual Members' Meeting and Election

On Sunday, June 8, 2014 at 3:00pm, the German Society will hold its 2014 Annual Meeting/ Elections for Directors at 611 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123. Members must be in good standing to be eligible to vote, i.e. current on dues no later than end of business Friday June 6, 2014. Members wishing to vote must be present at the meeting—there is no provision for absentee ballots or proxy voting under the Society's By-laws.

If you have any questions about your current membership status, please contact the Society's office at 215-627-2332 and speak with Catherine Fuller, or email her at info@germansociety.org. A slate of five candidates was presented to and approved by the Board of Directors before the March 17, 2014 meeting. Their vision statements and photos are found below.

In prior years, the new Board of Directors scheduled their first meeting right after the election. This year, we wish to extend an invitation to all present to participate in a social hour and provide opportunities for additional dialogue with the Officers and Directors.

– Ernie Weiler

Candidates



Charles Borowsky

I was born in Silesia (Oberschlesien) just before WWII. In 1945, my homeland became part of Poland under a communist regime. Later in life, as a professor of Sociology with a research interest in the US youth movements of the 1960's, I published my first book covering that movement and its equivalent in Eastern Europe. This did not sit too well with the Polish authorities, and I was asked to leave the country.

That book opened the door to various forums in Europe and America. After a conference at the UN, I was invited to join the faculty at Yale University, and later- University of Maryland. Today, I am leading two organizations - *Intermuse* (*promoting classical music around the world*) and *International Institute for Regional Studies* - built on my prior international academic experience. It is the music connection which brought me into contact with the German Society several years ago. Having been a GSP member for the past six years, I arranged for the German youth orchestra from *Rheinland-Pfalz* to perform at the Society in 2008 and brought other musicians to perform at our site. Our family ensemble, known as *American Virtuosi*, has likewise played here several times. We have also enriched the Society with the annual Lobster Fest a fundraising event for musical programs. As a Board member, I would be honored to continue sharing my experience with the Society by (1) serving on the Music Committee, and (2) being a liaison with other ethnic groups in the Philadelphia area.

– Dr. Charles Borowsky

Allen Krumm

I would like to continue to support the German Society in its various programs aimed at preserving German heritage and culture. The progress made over the past few years in terms of building improvements and establishing a sound financial basis should serve as both an encouragement and a source of motivation for all the members of the Society.

– Allen Krumm





Jean Godsall-Myers

I grew up in the Philadelphia region, and returned after graduate school. I began teaching German, first in the secondary school and then at the collegiate level (Widener University). I became a member of the German Society in 1976; over the years, I was involved with the 1983 celebration, brought my students to events and had them do volunteer work, and assisted with the Scholarship Committee. From 2006-10 I lived and worked in Germany, where as co-director of the ELCA Wittenberg Center I worked with American academic and congregational tour groups.

Upon our return, my husband and I moved to Harleysville, PA. I coordinate the lecture series of the *Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache* (based in Wiesbaden). I am currently an adjunct instructor in German at West Chester University. I consider the GSP to offer valuable programs to a diverse audience. My skills would be helpful in working with the Library and/or the Scholarship Committee.

– Dr. Jean E. Godsall-Myers

Lou Oschmann

I was born in Philadelphia a few years ago and am a proud third-generation German-American, because my grandfather immigrated here in 1873. It has been a personal privilege and honor for me to be a member of the German Society for over forty-one years. Over the years, I have seen many changes, mostly for the better, and I've served the Society in various official capacities, including vice president and house committee chairman. However, the most important aspect has been knowing so many interesting people, those who represent the best of German-American culture.

As a lifetime member of the society and current board member, I am active on the arts, finance, membership, and library committees, and see the German Society as a well-funded non-profit organization, with a substantive endowment. Also, I see it as cultural center, an educational magnet, a community center, and a vital link to all other German-American groups in the Delaware Valley.



– Lou Oschmann.



Richard Hardt

I've been a member of the German Society since 1995, and have always enjoyed the Wister Concerts, Oktoberfests, Christkindlemarkts, and every dinner I've been able to attend presented by the Woman's Auxiliary. If elected to serve on the Board, I will endeavor to give something back to this great Society. I'm a retired lawyer and was previously the Director of Litigation for the Harleysville Insurance Companies, now a part of Nationwide Insurance.

I am a former President of the John Peter Zenger Society and also served as a Vice President of the Lower Saldord Historical Society. Today, I'm a Vice Commander of the Military Order of Foreign Wars and earlier I was in the U. S. Army as a First Lieutenant. I have always been proud of my German heritage and look forward to an opportunity to serve.

– Richard Hardt

Germans and the Civil War Symposium- September 7, 2013

This unique symposium featuring the story of German-Americans in the Civil War at the 150th Anniversary saw sixty plus attendees gather at the German Society of Pennsylvania on Spring Garden Street to hear three noteworthy speakers address various aspects of the role of Germans and German-Americans in the Civil War. In addition, Jim Schmick and his wife once again hauled their traveling inventory of books, magazines, flags, and prints of *Civil War & More* from Mechanicsburg to the symposium to add to the festivities.

Dr. Randall Miller, Professor at St. Joseph's University spoke about the often neglected—from our Yankee perspective!—subject of the Germans in the South, as part of his work in progress about the effect of the Civil War on immigrants. Professor Miller points out that some believe that service in the war made Germans into Americans, while others that it made Germans more German. He pointed out that the Chancellorsville debacle impugned German honor and manliness. There were larger German communities in the North, while those in the South were smaller and had little Southern identity. There were, however, large German communities in Richmond, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile and New Orleans. What brought the Germans in the South

to those cities? They were port arrivals from the revolutions of 1848—many were '48ers against slavery, and when the Nativists arose, the Germans were chased away; the Civil War forced them to show their hand. Prof. Miller offered an informative array of statistics about the population of Germans in the South to shed light on his talk. (He pointed out the Texan German experience is often used to generalize about Germans in the South, but this is not accurate, since Texas had fewer slaves and the Germans there were Pietists and Mennonites (Germans elsewhere were Protestants, Catholics and Jewish). They were often pacifists and opposed to slavery—not a popular stance with Southerners—which Miller contends *reinforced* their German national identity.

In addition, the Civil War prevented additional Germans from entering the United States. The hardships in certain Confederate cities, e.g. Richmond and Charleston, led the Germans to oppose Reconstruction after the war.

Dr. Christian Keller, Professor of History at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, gave as his talk “German Americans in the Civil War; A Military and Social Overview.”

Prof. Keller concurred that the Germans smarted from their reputation gathered at Union losses at

Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, where they were unfairly derided as the “The Flying Dutchmen” for their cowardice and unsoldierly behavior, in part due no doubt to the nativism and general prejudice and the Germans voting Democratic.

Keller pointed out that Germans *enlisted* to fight—despite voting Democratic—and that in 1861 ethnic *regiments* were formed, with 25 percent fighting exclusively in German regiments where German only was spoken. He added that there were other exclusive German companies within other regiments. (In Pennsylvania there were five German regiments; from New York seven; with none from Massachusetts.)

Keller cites the proportions of soldiers fighting as 12 percent USCT, 25 percent Germans, and the remainder as Irish, Scandinavians, and those of other nationalities that settled in the United States.

Keller believes that the prejudice towards the Germans as a minority showed up especially after Chancellorsville. He stated that Germans were looked down on for their marauding, with non-Germans not used to those tactics that came to be known as “hard war”. In addition, 40 percent were killed or wounded in the battle, with German leader Carl Schurz being blamed. (The New York papers reported that they “ran like

sheep before wolves.”

These newspaper reports were repeated all over the country.) This contributed to a rebirth of nativism. The German press rose to protect the Germans who fought. Professor Miller asserted that the Germans were not as “Americanized” as the Irish by the Civil War. He believes that the “melting pot” and assimilation is a myth.

Dr. Andy Waskie, Professor at Temple University, explained that Germans came to America in waves of immigration, many before Germany was united, i.e. after the wars that ended in 1813, the revolutions of 1830 and especially after 1848. They came to America to **Philadelphia**, which was becoming an industrial engine for the country. These Germans shared a common language, culture and ethnic characteristics, moving to the areas known now as Spring Garden, Kensington, Northern Liberties, and Fishtown.

They were known for their singing societies, shooting, sports, such as gymnastics, beer halls, and formed fire companies. The 98th Pennsylvania under John Ballier was one predominately Philadelphia and German regiments. (The Germans were excellent band musicians!)

Dr. Waskie pointed out that the first Philadelphia casualty of the war was a German, George Leisening, stabbed to death in the riots in Baltimore at the outset of seces-

sion. Waskie added that the Germans were particularly skilled at artillery and that the German women’s societies helped in the war effort. They were involved in the USO and the Sanitary Commission of 1864 at Logan Circle. He named many Germans who served honorably and notably in the Civil War to illustrate their influence. To name a couple:

- General Louis Wagner came to America in 1849 and fought and was wounded in the Second Battle of Bull Run and once again at Chancellorsville. Though incapacitated, he took over the command of the African-American troops at Camp William Penn.

- Elizabeth Hutter, who formed the Northern Home for Friendless Children, was a homefront heroine who worked tirelessly as a nurse during the Civil War and later for other causes and who was counted a personal friend of Abraham Lincoln.

The day ended with a question and answer period, another visit to Jim Schmick’s cornucopia of books and sundries at *Civil War & More* and a tour of the German Society of Pennsylvania, followed by a delicious German style luncheon provided by the Womens Auxiliary. The Symposium was co-sponsored by the German Society, the General Meade Society, the G.A.R. Museum & Library, and the Union League of Philadelphia.

– Dr. Anthony Waskie

Continued from page 1

This turned out to be correct and, after reshaping, it was successfully installed in late February during the weekend that was also a highlight of our event calendar for this year.

The 3rd annual BierFest demonstrated clearly that seven hundred guests, eighty volunteers and sixty vendors are the limit for events inside our building complex. In fact, we could only accommodate that many people by extending the event onto our neighbor’s premises, owned by Latvian Society. Using our garden as a passageway between the two locations revealed again the potential for its extended future use. One of the biggest challenges for such an event – namely the processing of approximately six hundred guests in forty-five minutes - was perfectly orchestrated by a group of volunteers from TUGS (Temple University German Society) and PRG (Philadelphia Roller Girls) under the direction of our new Office Manager, Catherine Fuller, and our Treasurer, Lew Volgenau. Bravo!

To get a better impression of the BierFest festivities please visit our website or Facebook page to view photos and Vimeo to watch a video about the event.

– Tony Michels

Looking back ... and ahead!

On January 23, the Horner Memorial Library lecture series honoring the 250th Anniversary of the German Society got off to a great start with Dr. Friederike Baer's talk on Paul Schoeppe, a con man who managed to gain the support of many German-Americans during his 1869 murder trial. He did get away with his life though he might have been hardly innocent, and he possibly committed more crimes – but he was smart enough to change his name to John Smith, making it very difficult to follow his tracks all the way from the 21st century, as you can imagine! The February talk featured Dr. Randy Donaldson comparing the German Societies of Pennsylvania and Maryland, which were founded less than twenty years apart and for similar reasons, but developed very differently ... and one big difference was symbolized by the lecture's location – we know that the German Society of Maryland once had a library as well, but it no longer exists, whereas its Pennsylvania cousin even tailored its building to ensure that the books would always be prominently featured.

Looking ahead, the next lecture on March 20 will go back in time to the founding days of Pennsylvania, when William Penn traveled to Germany in 1677 to advertise his colony in North America. Our

speaker, Dr. Jürgen Overhoff, has been to the Society before, and we are very glad he can be with us again in our Anniversary year, and with his talk being in English, this time he should be reaching an even wider audience. The week after, we have a chance to explore another aspect of history: on Friday, March 28, the German Society will partner with Chef Walter Staib and the Harriton House in Bryn Mawr to bring you a special culinary treat – a cooking demonstration in Harriton's colonial kitchen, where Chef Staib filmed many episodes of his Emmy Award-winning PBS series "A Taste of History". He will prepare for us what would have been typical dishes for the German immigrants living in Philadelphia around the time the German Society was founded in 1764. Space will be limited, so make sure to get your reservation in now!

– Maria Sturm

Take a trip back in time and explore German- American roots...

Trappe/Collegeville Trip June 21, 2014

So what was life back closer to the time when the German Society was founded? Come find out about life in the mid-18th Century! On Saturday, June 21, 2014, the Library Committee

will lead a bus trip to three sites in Trappe/Collegeville, PA. The focus will be the lives of the German-American Muhlenberg family, known for their contributions to the US at the time of our nation's formation and the leadership they gave the German Society during its formative years.

Lisa Miniardi from Winterthur will guide us through the sites.

9.30 Air-conditioned bus will leave the German Society

10.45 Augustus Lutheran Church in Trappe (The church where H M Muhlenberg served)

12.00 Lunch at the Trappe Tavern; travelers choose and pay for their choice of entree

1.30 Henry Melchior House (The home of Henry and Anna Muhlenberg)

2.30 Speaker's House (The home of Frederick Muhlenberg)

3.30 Return to German Society, arriving by 4.30

The cost of \$35.00 covers transportation, site admissions, and the guided tours. Interested travelers should register by calling the Office Manager at the German Society. Checks should be made to the German Society. For further questions, contact Dr. Jean Godsall-Myers, wittjgm@gmail.com.

– Dr. Jean Godsall-Myers,
Schöne Reise!

Annual Fund Donors

We thank all who contributed so generously to this year's Annual Fund. If you have not, it is not too late to make a donation. We need these funds to help balance our annual operating budget. Our goal for this year is \$ 64,000, in part to help support some of the special 250th celebratory events and at this point we have collected \$36,500.

**Names have been removed from the
online version.**

Calendar of Upcoming Events

**Welcome to our New
Members!**

March

- Thur. March 20 6:00pm Lecture: Dr. Jürgen Overhoff – “William Penn’s Travels in Germany, 1677”
- Sun. March 23 3:00pm “Wister and More!” presents the Wister Quartet
- Tues. March 25 12:00pm Philly Wine Week: Book signing with Sommelier Marnie Old
- Tues. March 25 6:30pm Wine: A Tasting Course with Marnie Old
- Wed. March 26 6:30pm A Tasting Tour of Rheinland Wines
- Fri. March 28 6:00pm Colonial Cooking with Chef Walter Staib at Harriton House in Bryn Mawr

Names have been removed from the
online version.

April

- Sat. April 5 7:00pm Hamburger Abend
- Wed. April 9 7:00pm *Konversationsabend* with Prof. Horst Rolly from Friedensau University in Germany
- Fri. April 11 6:30pm Friday FilmFest, “Ludwig II”
- Sat. April 12 1:30pm Buchclub: Norbert Gstrein's "Die englischen Jahre/The English Years"
- Sun. April 27 3:00pm “Wister and More!” presents American Virtuosi
- Mon. April 28 7:00pm Dürrenmatt’s “Die Physiker” performed by the EBS Players of Elmshorn, Germany

May

- Sat. May 3 12:00pm Women’s Auxiliary Annual Luncheon
- Fri. May 9 6:30pm Friday FilmFest, “Hannah Arendt”
- Sat. May 10 1:30pm Buchclub: Eugenie Marlitt's "Das Geheimnis der alten Mamsell/The Old Mamsell's Secret"
- Wed. May 14 7:00pm *Konversationsabend* with Karl Moehlmann on Bertoldt Brecht and Thomas Mann
- Sun. May 18 3:00pm “Wister and More!” presents EStrella Piano Duo
- Wed. May 21 6:30pm Lecture: Dr. Lynn Tatlock–“German Romance in America: The Translations of Annis Lee Wister and the Americans who Read them (1868-1907)”
- Sat. May 31 6:00pm Spring Fling at the Grange Estate in Havertown

**Herzlich
Wilkommen!**



Spring Fling

May 31, 6:00pm at the
Grange Estate in
Havertown, PA

When spring turns to summer the time is right for a night of dinner and dancing. Join us at the end of May for an informal evening with friends and members of the German Society of Pennsylvania.

To complete the evening, enjoy dinner, drinks, and live music. Celebrate the 250th anniversary of the German Society by dancing under the stars! This will be an evening for all ages. Children under the age of three years attend free.

The German Society of Pennsylvania

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The official registration information of the German Society of Pennsylvania may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999.

Registration does not imply endorsement.



Save the date:
Women's Luncheon
Saturday, May 3rd, 2014

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The German Society of Pennsylvania
611 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19123-3505

