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Calendar of Events

Thur. Mar. 19 Lecture: Lisa Minardi - “Pennsylvania German Fraktur: From A to Z”, 6.30pm
Fri. Mar. 20 Friday FilmFest presents ‘Nachtweg nach Lissabon’, 6.30pm
Wed. Apr. 8 Konversationsabend: China 300 Million Years Ago and Today, 6.00pm
Sat. Apr. 11 Women’s Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10.00am
Sat. Apr. 11 Buchclub: Marien Haushofer’s “Die Wand/The Wall”, 1.30pm
Sat. Apr. 11 Hamburger Abend, 7.00pm
Sun. Apr. 12 “Wister and More!” presents Melomanie, 3.00pm
Fri. Apr. 17 Friday FilmFest presents ‘Die Wand’, 6.30pm
Sat. May 2 Women’s Auxiliary 115th Anniversary Luncheon, 12.00pm
Sun. May 10 “Wister and More!” presents The Wister Quartet, 3.00pm
Wed. May 13 Konversationsabend: Theater Scene in Berlin, Fall 2014, 6.00pm
Fri. May 15 Friday FilmFest presents “Der ganz große Traum”, 6.30pm
Sun. May 31 “Wister and More!” jointly with the Delius Society presents Michael Djupstrom & Ayana Kozasa, 3.00pm
Sat. June 6 Women’s Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10.00am
Sun. June 7 Annual Member’s Meeting and Election, 3.00pm

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During our very cold winter days this February it seemed hard to believe that spring is just around the corner and on June 7th we will elect a new group of officers and several directors for the German Society. According to our by-laws, officers are elected for two-year terms and must graciously vacate their posts after three consecutive terms. This means that Tony Michels, Hardy von Auenmueller and I will retire from our respective positions and with the membership’s approval in June we will take on new responsibilities. With Tony’s and Hardy’s help, the three of us formed an effective team which managed many of the affairs of the Society. I would like to thank them, as well as the other three officers, Lew Volgenau, Maria Sturm and Christiane Schmidt. Lew in fact does double service as Treasurer and VP of Finance. It has been my pleasure to work with all five officers in the past six years.

Similarly, we enjoyed the support of a strong and active Board of Directors. For the Directors’ class of 2015, only Reinhard Kruse will not stand for reelection because of a number of personal issues and we thank him for his service. The other four, Jeannette Brugger, Joseph DeMaria, Bill Hardham and James Niessen, are candidates for an additional three-year term.

I have truly enjoyed many parts of my ‘expanded volunteer job’ as President of the Society for the past five and half years. I met some wonderful and very generous members and friends of the Society that I intend to stay in touch with.

As we pass the baton it might be appropriate to list a few of the key accomplishments during this brief period in the history of the Society. First, during the past six to eight years a number of foundations responded positively to our many requests for grants, which allowed us to implement a number of much needed building improvements. In fact, we were awarded $1.6 MM and the large majority was earmarked for building construction efforts. Some of these projects will run for another two years, and I am certain that our old, but very impressive building, will present us with additional needs which will require sizable funds. The purpose of our Endowment Fund is to provide a predictable flow of cash which can be used for capital projects and also cover some of our administrative expenses.

A second area of my focus has been to build on existing management processes at the level of the board with the objective to help assure that the business of the Society is conducted efficiently and in a very transparent manner. As is typical in efforts like this, especially in organizations primarily staffed by volunteers, challenges remain and we consistently need to look for improvement opportunities.

The third area to highlight has to be our anniversary. What a year it has been and many of us at the Society conclude that our 250th Anniversary Year was a wonderful success which included more than 50 well attended programs and activities. And of course the Stiftungsfest with over 200 attendees, several honored guests and a delicious meal prepared by Chef Walter Staub was the premier event of the year. Let me thank our 250th Planning Committee for all their hands-on support and thank you to our membership, friends and all who attended the...
various events. We should also not forget or- 
ganizations such as the Styron Corporation, the 
Max Kade, Philadelphia and Arcadia Founda-
tions, as well as the Dow Chemical Company 
who all provided special funding for this cele-
batory year. We exposed large audiences to 
our beautiful building and programs and we 
tend to build on the publicity and overall mo-
mentum which has been created. For example, 
we will likely rerun our Spring Fling during 
2016, possibly offer another special cooking 
event, and this April we will start a multi-
months exhibition on the long and illustrious 
history of the German Society of Pennsylvania 
at the Philadelphia Museum, located on 7th 
Street very close to Market Street.

Finally, I should mention our Endowment Fund, 
which we established in 2011. You may have 
noticed that in every issue of the Staatsbote I 
try to have a short line or two on the status of 
this critical endeavor. With a bit of extra activity 
alate last year, I am pleased to note that we have 
now collected $630,000 and most importantly 
shortly five members or families have indi-
cated that the Society is in their wills. I am 
enthusiastic that in just a few years we will have 
reached the million dollar mark which is half of 
our announced interim goal of $2.00 MM.

I have been asked: “What will you do at the So-
ciety after the June elections?” I expect to focus 
our announced interim goal of $2.00 MM. 
In Fall 1999, when we moved to Philadelphia 
from Summit, NJ, I knew neither my way 
around town nor much about the German Soci-
ety. When I tried to find its location – with an 
old street map on my lap – I got lost, but was 
thankfully rescued by a friendly policeman who 
guided me with his patrol car right to the front 
steps of our historic building on Spring Garden 
Street. I realized then, why Philadelphia is 
called “city of brotherly love.” What a difference 
from New York, where I had lived and worked 
more than 50 years earlier.

Upon being introduced to our historic library by 
Annke Farago, the Society’s Executive Director 
of that time, I immediately visualized that I 
would be spending the years of my retirement 
in that beautiful space, and enjoy reading all 
the 70,000 plus books contained in this won-
derful collection. Annke was also a very per-
suasive person, and I began volunteering my 
services. I still remember my first job was as a 
“hands-on” dishwasher in the old Ratskeller 
Kitchen. The Society’s Board of Directors had 
just enjoyed a scrumptious New Year’s meal, 
catered by Walter Staib, and I scrubbed pots, 
pans and the floor, as my mother taught me.

Five years later, as I reflected on that experi-
ence, I realized that this country is indeed a 
land of opportunity. Where else could you move 
in your career from the position of a Dish-
washer to President, within such a short period 
of time? During those early years of volunteer-
ing, I met quite a few people who also joyously 
pitched in. Many of them were couples, such as 
Frank & Renee Genieser, Frank & Ellie Klare, 
Christel & Ron Tillmann as well as Lew & Hella 
Volgenau plus Ed Cohen, Ray Dietrich, Doris 
MacPherson, Inge Niebisch, Christiane Schmidt, 
Doris Simon, Karl Spaeth, Frank Trommler and, 
largely not last, Ernie Weiler. (If we have 
missed one or the other person, please forgive 
me. My memory of late, is no longer what it 
used to be.)

As you well know, most of these colleagues are 
still very active in our organization today. Yet 
ten years ago, as I weighed the decision to step 
into the presidency of our Society, they were 
the ones who encouraged me, and without their 
help, we would have never been able to change 
our operational profile to an all volunteer ef-
fort. Thanks to that spirit, and with utmost fis-
cal discipline, we accomplished a remarkable 
turn-around – from an $80 to $100,000 annual 
deficit in prior years to a surplus of similar size 
– within the first year. And we have been 
equally successful from a financial point of 
view, ever since.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those 
long time colleagues and friends for their in-
valuable support – benefitting our beloved So-
ciety, and me personally. I have recently added 
up in my mind the monetary value of the volun-
teering efforts rendered by these early col-
leagues, including their cash and in-kind dona-
tions, during those ten years, and arrived at a 
staggers sum of $1,000,000. If I were to add 
thereto the generous contributions from all our 
members – inspired by this exemplary spirit of 
giving – and attach a value to the support re-
ceived from the younger people who joined our 
Board in recent years, that sum may well ex-
ceed the $1,600,000 amount received from 
foundations, as described by Ernie Weiler in 
his report.

In fact, over the past six years, I have had the 
pleasure of working with Ernie Weiler and Tony 
Michels in a leadership team, commonly re-
f erred to as the “troika” and hopefully did not appear 
like the people charged 

Chairman’s Farewell
with getting things done. By putting the task at hand first, and setting aside any personal inclinations, we did the best we could to further the cause of the German Society. When our efforts were successful – a problem solved – we forgot all our differences of opinion. Even when the outward signs of success were not discernible, we felt richly rewarded. Looking back to those years, I truly believe we have accomplished a great deal.

I still remember the very first wedding we hosted in our building, ten years ago. It was an Egyptian Coptic couple. The bride's mother and I had to put up silken veils on the walls to hide the cracks in the plaster. We also did some quick touch-ups on the walls of our entrance hall. Now, with all the renovations in our entrance area and auditorium, plus the new restrooms downstairs, our space looks gorgeous, well suited for weddings and social gatherings. The desirability of our space is reflected in the ever-growing rental revenue.

Our cultural programs, particularly the Wister & More concert series, have risen in recognition. The superb acoustics of our auditorium were enhanced by the installation of quadruple glass windows and heavy curtains. The acquisition of a Bösendorfer grand piano allowed us to furnish our music room with eighty steps, from the street at 24 South 7th Street to step down as publisher/editor of our newsletter, after ten long years. It is a pleasure to tell you that Allen Krumm, who was a regular contributor to our newsletter, has agreed to take over that job. As a long-time Board colleague, he has amply demonstrated his excellent writing skills by issuing most of our film reviews. Furthermore, due to term limits, my chairmanship is coming to an end. This is not too soon, as our aging bodies will necessitate that my wife and I move out of our beloved Center City home, a “vertical house,” as our daughter calls it – with eighty steps, from our basement to the top floor — and look for an apartment with easy elevator access.

Good echoes, albeit from different audiences, have also been received with our monthly German film showings, organized by Allen Krumm and Karl Möhlmann, and our Konversationsabende, under the leadership of Helga Halbfass. These gatherings always present a good forum for dialogue and social interaction, and so did a series of historic lectures, organized by Maria Sturm as part of our 250th Anniversary celebrations, last year. However, the biggest crowds were drawn by our recent Annual Bierfests in mid-winter. This blockbuster event, organized as a cooperative venture with Marnie Old, a renowned sommelier and beer connoisseur, has morphed from the modest, but exquisite wine and beer tasting sessions in our Ratskeller, eight years ago. Thank you, Marnie, you have indeed been a godsend to the German Society.

A similarly positive development has been recorded with our Annual Stiftungsfest. Last year, as part of our Jubilee celebrations, it drew over 200 attendees. Ten years ago, when we first organized that event on our premises, we were merely 80 people; yet with the introduction of a silent auction, it immediately became the premier fundraising event for our organization. Starting with a champagne reception in our library, and followed by a scrumptious meal in our main hall – with old-fashioned music to listen or dance to – these gatherings bring back the romanticism of the late 19th Century when our forebears erected this venerable edifice. Perhaps, the time has come for me to enjoy reading some of the good books, upstairs in the library.

As a first step in that direction, I have decided – with this issue – to step down as publisher/editor of our newsletter, after ten long years. It is a pleasure to tell you that Allen Krumm has agreed to take over that job. As a long-time Board colleague, he has amply demonstrated his excellent writing skills by issuing most of our film reviews. Furthermore, due to term limits, my chairmanship is coming to an end. This is not too soon, as our aging bodies will necessitate that my wife and I move out of our beloved Center City home, a “vertical house,” as our daughter calls it – with eighty steps, from our basement to the top floor — and look for an apartment with easy elevator access.

Please accept my sincere wishes for the prospering of the German Society, whose progress I shall continue to follow with lively interest.

– Hardy von Auenmüller

Properly functioning plumbing is something we tend to take for granted. The problem we tackled and solved in the past four weeks has been a source of major GSP headaches for more than 25 years. Multiple times a year, we faced sewer backups with frequent basement flooding. Video inspection revealed several severe problems in the 130 year-old terracotta main sewer line system. The way the pipes were pitched and connected to the Marshall Street city sewer didn’t help either. We don’t know why the original builders of our main building decided to connect us to Marshal Street instead of to the deeper Spring Garden Street sewer. Whatever the reason, the resulting pitch of the sewer was definitely insufficient and, in combination with a misplaced house trap, caused the backups and frequent costly maintenance. We have built a new main sewer line that connects two feet deeper into the Spring Garden Street pipe and moved the new house trap into a spot where it doesn’t slow down the flow as it did previously.

Just a few days before our very successful 4th Annual Bierfest (with more than 700 participants), we connected the new outside line to the existing system in the Schlaraffia Room. There we replaced another 20 feet of pipe (obviously originally installed some 130 years ago by a plumber having a very bad day). Although we still need to replace the old pipes under the Ratskeller floor in the future, we have already achieved a level of operational reliability that will make it much less stressful to organize events and rentals as we move forward.

– Tony Michels

The German Society at the Philadelphia History Museum

The German Society’s 250th Anniversary is officially over, but there will be one more chance to pay tribute to the Society’s history (and future): The Community History Gallery at the Philadelphia History Museum showcases exhibitions by Philadelphia-based community groups, schools, and non-profit organizations about their work. This year, we are honored to announce having been selected for this “Community Voices” program.

Our exhibit will run from April to October 2015, with the opening reception at the Museum scheduled for April 16 at 6:00pm. We would like to take this opportunity to invite all our members to attend the reception and enjoy a special presentation by the Franklinville-Schwarzwald Männerchor! And if you can’t make it on the 16th, please come to the museum, open Tuesdays to Saturdays from 10:30am to 4:30pm. It is located at 15 South 7th Street.

Incidentally, the German Society’s former headquarters were located just across the street at 24 South 7th Street—from 1806 to 1888—before the move to its current location at 611 Spring Garden Street. With the exhibit ‘The German Society of Pennsylvania: Celebrating 250 Years’, we’re looking forward to telling our story to the city of Philadelphia and beyond!

– Maria Sturm
Hans Mueller has accepted the nomination for Vice President, Capital Projects to provide support for the many projects Tony Michels is overseeing and to support the planning process for the additional capital projects that are in the pipeline.

In the role of Senior Vice President, Hardy von Auenuemiller has agreed to continue with many of his current responsibilities (such as the successful Music Program) as well as add some of the current Executive Vice President duties (such as oversight of the social programs). He will also be the individual who will step in when the President is unable to attend a meeting or event and will assist the President with new initiatives as they may arise.

In terms of Director positions, only one member of the Class of 2012-2015, Reinhard Kruse, is choosing not to run again thus opening a Director position. Also, Hans Mueller’s unexpired term of 2015-2016 becomes vacant since he has accepted the nomination for Vice President, Capital Projects. Please refer to the mission/vision statements of the two individuals running for these two Director positions – Dr. Petra Goedde and Charles Becker.

A final personal note, I am very excited about the new team that is being proposed as I believe roles are aligned with individual’s strengths and there are more hands to accomplish the work of the German Society! —Christiane R. Schmidt

Hans Mueller - VP of Capital Projects

I have enjoyed being a member of the Board for the past five years and seeing up close the progress that the Society has made. I wish to help extend this positive trend by joining the Executive Committee as Vice President for Capital Projects. My engineering background and DuPont management experience should serve me well in this position and help the Society achieve its mission as it enters the next half-century. I grew up in Dresden, came to the USA for Aerospace Graduate School and retired five years ago from the DuPont Company in Wilmington, Delaware where I spent my entire career. My wife Harriett and I have been members of the Society for more than 25 years.

Christiane Schmidt - Secretary

I am pleased to again accept the nomination for Secretary. My commitment to the membership two years ago was to take an active role in the 250th Anniversary activities and I kept that commitment. For this next term, I would like to focus on our volunteers. The GSP is fortunate to have a strong small group of dedicated volunteers. With limited financial resources, there are many more opportunities where time and talents are needed. We must revitalize our approach to volunteerism since we all desire to see our Society flourish another 250 years.

Maria Sturm - VP of Culture and Heritage

As VP for Culture and Heritage, my first priority remains the library, where we are finally close to our goal of including all of our holdings in the online catalog. Soon, there will also be crucial improvements in the physical surroundings of this unique collection – a new HVAC system, supported by the William Penn Foundation, and repairs to the townhouse sections occupied by the library and archives. Supervising these projects will be one aspect of my work over the next three years, while at the same time building on the varied events I contributed to the 250th Anniversary celebrations – for example, continuing the lecture series - and in general organizing contributions to major historical milestones, whether they are imminent - like the 25th Anniversary of German Reunification – or further into the future, like the 200th Anniversary of the Library in 2017, a year which will also see the 100th Anniversary of American entry into World War I – all this in the hope that all this in the hope that the Library will continue to represent both our commitment to scholarly research and to the activities of the German Society as a whole. Last but not least, I will remain involved with PhillyKinder – which has grown from 50 to 100 participants since 2012. There is no better reminder of the future ahead than those weekly encounters with the next generation of German-Americans!
Lew Volgenau - VP of Finance and Treasurer
250 Years. We can be proud of our history and that we are the only one of the Colonial Societies who has their own building. But what of the future? We need to continue to develop and grow our programs for the next generations. Basic to our mission is the implicit understanding that we will have the financial wherewithal to continue to do so. The requirements are balanced annual budgets; a portfolio of investments to serve as a “rainy day” fund; and an appropriately sized endowment fund. These are all areas that the Finance Committee and I have strived to achieve over the past several years. As your VP of Finance and Treasurer, I look forward to serving you for another term.

Hardy von Auenmueller - Senior VP
After ten years in a leadership position at The German Society – first as President, and then as Chairman – I know it’s time to take my hand off the throttle, and let younger people move into the leadership positions of our organization. In the newly created position of Senior Vice President, I will – with your consent – continue to lend support to the Society’s expanded management team, although mostly in an advisory position—for as long as my health and age will allow.

Over the past ten years, I believe we have been reasonably successful in positioning our organization as the premier German-American cultural institution in the Greater Philadelphia area. With my personal interests in music, theatre, language and the arts, I will do my best to enhance our cultural programs, and to look for appropriate outreach opportunities, both here and abroad, including the newly envisioned city partnership of Philadelphia with Frankfurt.

Ernie Weiler - VP of Development
During the past six years, as President of the German Society, I worked diligently as noted in summary for the prior election cycle on seeking funds for improving the physical appearance and functionality of our building, to enhance the business planning processes within the Society, to initiate an Endowment Fund and to coordinate the planning and the execution of our 250th Anniversary celebration during 2014.

For the next two years, as Vice President of Development, I will continue with my efforts to build a meaningful Endowment Fund and to move us closer to our interim goal of $2.00 MM. I will also stay in touch with the five foundations that provided most of the funds to undertake the various building enhancement projects during the past six to eight years. And as a member of our Executive Committee I will support the various initiatives to grow the Society and to help assure that we remain financially strong and stay true to our mission and vision to be recognized as the premier German ethnic Society in the United States.

Candidates: Directors

Charlie Becker
I have had the privilege of being a member of the German Society of Pennsylvania in excess of 20 years. I’ve seen many changes during that time, and as a Board Member, fortunately, I’ve had the privilege of being part of that change. We have come a long way and must work hard to sustain those accomplishments. We have many challenges in front of us and I feel that I can best contribute by continuing serving on the Board of Directors. As a member of the Board, I am able to be an active participant in meeting those opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. It is my ambition to continue active participation by serving on the Board of Directors, as part of that decision making team that takes the German Society into the future and assist in achieving those future accomplishments that will best serve both the membership and our community.

Jeanette Brugger
I have been a member of the German Society for nearly 6 years. My mother is third-generation (Wuesthoff) and my father grew up in the Black Forest. I serve as the 2nd Vice President of the Women’s Auxiliary of the German Society. I’m particularly interested in promoting, expanding, and modernizing the events and membership of the German Society. I am a member of the Marketing and Website Committee. As a resident and employee of the City of Philadelphia, I’m interested in the position of the Society in the heritage, history, and future of the City.

Joe DeMaria
This is my 19th year as a member of The Society, and if re-elected, I would be serving my third and final term as a Director. I continue to serve as Chairman of the Membership Committee, have acted as MC at our Stiftungsfest for the past four years and continue to assist the Board with regard to various legal issues. My belief remains quite firm that The German Society of Pennsylvania fills a much needed role as the premier organization to further the cause of German culture, and acknowledgment of the contributions of Germans to our country, not only in Philadelphia, but throughout the Commonwealth and the nation. If re-elected, I shall continue to champion, and do what I can to further that role.

Peta Goedde
My interest in and engagement with the German Society rests on three foundations. First, as a native of Germany who came to this country more than two decades ago to earn a PhD in history, I like the idea and want to foster the continued existence of a German cultural center in Philadelphia. Secondly, as a historian of U.S. foreign relations with a particularly interest in cultural relations (Temple University), I appreciate the work the German Society has done over the last 250 years to both keep German traditions alive and adapt to its changing role within Philadelphia and American society. Thirdly as a parent of three bi-lingual children, who feel equally comfortable in Germany and the United States, I am grateful for the existence of the PhillyKinder under the auspices of the German Society. The team of teachers and volunteers do a tremendous job teaching our kids about German culture, history, and places. As a board member, I hope to draw on my expertise as a German-American historian to help shape the future cultural offerings of the Society. Of equal importance will be to offer continued support to the PhillyKinder as it expands and considers its long-term sustainability.

Bill Hardham
Although my surname is English, my genealogical research shows that I am 10% German, so part of my interest in things German has a genetic basis. Also, as a newly minted PhD chemist in 1961, I spent a year doing research in a Max Planck Institute in Germany and developed an appreciation for German science and culture (and beer and...
Lecture by Dr. Frank Trommler

If you were not at the German Society’s Horner Library on the evening of December 10, 2014, you missed one of the best talks of the lecture series organized by Maria Sturm on the occasion of our 250th Anniversary. Professor Frank Trommler discussed German Kulturpolitik and Cultural Diplomacy, a subject which he knows well having written The Book about it, Kultur macht ohne Kompass: deutsche auswärtige Kulturbeziehungen im 20. Jahrhundert, considered the final word on the subject (and he graciously donated a copy to our Library, in case you’d like to check it out yourself).

Maria Sturm graciously introduced Frank Trommler not only as the consummate academician that he is, but she also reminded us that he spearheaded, together with Elliott Shore and a group of dedicated members, and supported by the entire German Society membership, an extraordinarily successful fund drive which raised several million dollars in the 1990s.

The replacement of the handwritten catalogue of our library holdings by an online version made the German Society a relevant destination for both American and international researchers.

At that time, our venerable building was on the brink of becoming a ruin. The Horner library could not be entered without danger to life and limb because heavy chunks of material crashed to the floor. It was discovered that many elements of our roof were rotten.

The long delayed deferred maintenance came to an end.

Today, the work is still in progress.

All of this would not have been possible without Frank Trommler, whose quiet and effective deeds have benefitted the German Society for decades.

Trommler spoke about German Kultur policy and diplomacy. Culture and diplomacy are of course not identical with the culture, but only the treatment which the culture received - or the manipulation, falsification, suppression, enhancement through the official policy of the state.

It was most interesting, as Trommler pointed out, that much of the conventional writing of History rarely considers cultural aspects, but mostly and almost exclusively considers political and military factors.

The First World War was not started by strong territorial ambitions or ideological conflicts, but was fought as a contrast of cultures. German soldiers were provided with massive amounts of “high culture” literature, such as books by Goethe, Schiller and Kleist. This was meant to arm them with mental and spiritual strength in the fight against those other cultures, French, British, American. Kaiser Wilhelm II thought of himself as the incarnation of German Kultur.

Bismarck never addressed cultural matters. There is no mention of any cultural aspects in the Constitution which he wrote after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/71. He knew too well that not all German states were happy to be formed in the Prussian mold, for example Bavaria. Hitler had no reservations in this respect: Ein Volk ein Reich ein Führer was the basis for his Kulturpolitik and propaganda.

Goebbels was mindful of the difference between Kultur and propaganda. He actually supported the opening of over 1000 new libraries. But the distortion of German culture by Nazi policy due to the persecution of Jewish Germans, and the suppression of major cultural aspects such as German Expressionism or the Bauhaus Movement, to name but a few, was nothing but disastrous.

France was the first country to promote culture as a part of official policy. The Alliance Française is the oldest such organization, followed by an Italian Institute. They still exist and teach the language and inspire the love and admiration of France and Italy. The German Goethe Institute is a comparative late comer.

Trommler pointed out that the Weimar Republic had no money to promote German culture. It really did not need to, because its liberal policies provided the foundation for the almost volcanic explosion that was the German cultural phenomenon of the 1920s.

It may be correct, as Trommler stated, that the West German Bundesrepublik did not have much of a Kultur policy until the 1960s. But it is also true that this first decade after the Second World War experienced a reawakening, an attempt at the removal of the heavy layers of Nazi cultural policy, a reconnection with the explosive cultural development of the 1920s. It was the time in which Günter Grass, Heinrich Böll and Uwe Johnson wrote. It was the time when the Philharmonie in Berlin, as built by the architect Hans Scharoun. It was a Manifesto of Freedom built adjacent to the Soviet Zone, where the Stalin Allee reminded everyone of the suppressive cultural policies of the Soviet Regime.

Cultural life in the early years of the Bundesrepublik was not the result of state sponsored cultural policy, but the result of a groundswell of a cultural awareness.

Trommler observed that one cultural organization became almost a movement which can be followed like a red thread throughout the entire 20th century in Germany: Der Deutsche Werkbund was not part of an official cultural policy. It was concerned with the workman-like creation of everyday utensils and furniture, and also architectural aspects of design. It tried to do away with the heavy Wilhelminian style, which only copied historic forms. Thus, it became a new and relevant Weltanschauung. The Bauhaus learned from it.

Thank you, Frank Trommler, for yet another magnificent contribution to the life of the German Society of Pennsylvania.

— Otto Reichert-Facilides
On February 6th we lost a great leader of the German Society, Dr. George J. Beichl. Members of the Society, friends and family attended an inspiring service at Old St. Joseph’s Church in the historic part of Philadelphia. He was buried with full military honors at the Holy Sepulcher Cemetery in Cheltenham, Pa. The Philadelphia Police closed down the Expressway and the Roosevelt Boulevard for the procession of cars to pass safely to the cemetery. The family arranged for a delicious luncheon at the Society.

Dr. Beichl was truly an extraordinary man who served his country valiantly during World War II, came back to complete his Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania and subsequently taught chemistry at St. Joseph’s University for 50 years and was Chairman of the Chemistry Department for many years. He served as President of the German Society from 1974 to 1993. Arranging and coordinating the 300th Anniversary in 1983 of the founding of Germantown must be viewed as one of his key accomplishments. He along with then Vice-President Bush and Mayor Green of Philadelphia traveled to Krefeld, where the original settlers came from. This trip and substantive contacts with German officials helped secure significant funding for our Library project of the mid 1990’s. Dr. Beichl represented the interests as well the views of the German-American community in the popular press and he actively reached out to many of the German clubs and organizations in the tri-state area.

His many honors include the German Verdienstkreuz Category One, a Civil Order of Merit awarded by the German government, and he also was the recipient of the German-American of the Year Award in 1993, given by the predecessor organization to the German American Heritage Foundation in Washington DC.

In 2009, we completed the Beichl Tower, thanks to the most generous support by Ulrich Both and Hans Trustdorf, plus many members of the German Society, who all revered Dr. Beichl. We decided to name our newly constructed elevator annex in his honor—The Beichl Tower.” This modern elevator now provides direct access to the Library as well as all floors in the Society building. And in recognition of his many contributions, the Women’s Auxiliary established a Dr. George Beichl Scholarship, which is given annually through a competitive selection process to a student majoring in German and attending one of our regional universities or colleges.

To help make real his long-term vision and belief that the Society should remain strong and vibrant for many years to come, we would like to establish a George J. Beichl Memorial Fund in the Endowment account managed by The Philadelphia Foundation. All donations, no matter what size, made in his honor will be added to this fund. The Beichl Family, in the obituary placed in the Inquirer, designated the German Society as one of two recipients for donations made in his memory. This is indeed greatly appreciated. The following individuals and/or families have made a contribution:

- Ernie Weiler

Names removed from online version

Sehr vielfältig wurde von unserem Experten A. F. Baden-Württemberg beschrieben: "Ich selbst habe für ein Jahr in Freiburg gelebt, weil mein Vater dort aufgewachsen ist. Wir besuchten Ulm (Reynsburg, des weltbekannten Puzzlespielen) und den Schwarzwald sowie Frankreich ... und die Schweiz ... Der Bodensee ist der größte See Deutschlands und ein wichtiger Trinkwasserspeicher. ... Baden-Württemberg wurde nach dem 2. Weltkrieg aus den drei Ländern Württemberg, Baden und Hohenzollern zu einem Bundesland vereint."


— Sonja Srama-Sounder und Maria Sturm