



Neuer Pennsylvanischer

# Staatsbote

Internet: [www.germansociety.org](http://www.germansociety.org)

Winter 2010/11

## Chairman's Comments

When I first saw the majestic 19th Century building of the German Society—with its beautiful library—on Spring Garden Street, I was in awe! I remember that visit well. It was the day before Thanksgiving in 1999. Gudrun and I had just moved from Northern Jersey to an apartment in Center City, after our daughter had beckoned to us with her newly born son for whom she needed a babysitter.

Since it had long been our desire to live (upon retirement) in a major city offering a wide range of cultural events, Philadelphia sounded like a good option, worth trying. We had known all along that at one time that city had a very large German population. So, we were elated to hear that there was a German cultural institution dating back to colonial times.

When I tried to find my way to it, not yet being familiar with the street pattern of Philadelphia, I got lost somewhere north of Girard Avenue. I asked a police officer if he could give me directions to Spring Garden Street. Much to my surprise, he escorted me with his patrol car right to the door steps of the German Society.

After having lived in and around New York City for most of my adult life, I thought, "Wow, what a contrast to the Big Apple. What a friendly city!"

My feeling has not changed in this respect. Within two years we bought a house and settled in our present home on South 17th Street. We have never regretted our move to Philly.

—Cont'd on page 2

## President's Message

The fall is quickly coming to a close and the Holiday Season is just ahead. For many of us this is a busy time of the year, but also a wonderful time where we visit and correspond with family members and friends. It is also a season where we can count our blessings.

We at the Society are thankful for the generous contributions of many volunteers, who give their time, energy and talents to maintain or enhance our programs and activities, and who also help us with the necessary maintenance and repairs in our buildings.

We were all reminded at our 246<sup>th</sup> Stiftungsfest on November 6<sup>th</sup> that some members are exceedingly generous and are very much concerned that the Society may continue to live its mission and vision for generations to come.

Mr. Ulrich Both presented the Society with a gift of \$50,000 to enable us to start an Endowment Fund for the ongoing support of the organization. We will provide more details about this new Endowment Fund and our plans for its growth in the next issue of the Staatsbote.

Our music program will be significantly enhanced with the acquisition of a 7ft Boesendorfer concert piano, made possible by a matching grant from the Barthelmes Foundation, selected contributions of friends of the our music program, members of the Board and the generosity of our Chairman of the Board, Hardy von Auenmueller. —Cont'd on page 2

## Our Building Challenge

Like in other German American organizations in the Philadelphia area, our building is our biggest non-human asset. From previous reports, you may already be aware of the next steps in our plan to create a German Society building that integrates modern improvements with the need to protect this important historic landmark.

During the next several months, we will make preparations for the next phase of renovations, which will take place next summer during the months of July and August. We had considered the possibility of doing major projects, such as the restroom renovation, during the winter break around Christmas time, but determined that a 3 week period would be

—Cont'd on page 3

### In This Issue pg.

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| • Chairman's Comments      | 1 |
| • President's Message      | 1 |
| • Our Building Challenge   | 1 |
| • Changing of the Guard    | 2 |
| • Unexpected Generosity    | 3 |
| • Photo Spread of Events   | 4 |
| • New Members              | 6 |
| • Membership               | 6 |
| • Calendar of Events       | 7 |
| • German Unity Celebration | 8 |

*Chairman's Comments Cont'd—*

My first experience with the Society was rather disappointing. A gig involving a dixieland band from Eastern Germany was cancelled on very short notice. I soon realized that in the non-profit environment things are not always handled with the same degree of efficiency as I was used to from my career in the business world.

At that time, I was still commuting on a regular basis from the US to my home state of Saxony—as I had done over the previous decade since the "fall" of the Berlin Wall. Not wanting to miss out on the growing up of our grandson, I decided to wind down my activities in Eastern Germany. So, I looked for volunteering opportunities here in Philadelphia.

Annke Farago, our Executive Director of that time, asked me to participate in the monthly *Konversationsabend* discussions and report on the social and economic changes of Eastern Germany, as I experienced them during the 1990's. After two such presentations, Mike Masko, the leader of that group, had to withdraw for personal and professional reasons. I was asked to take over.

During the past ten years, I have guided this monthly German discussion forum over a wide range of subjects—with almost 100 sessions and a cumulative attendance of about 3,000 people. While I thoroughly enjoyed my time at the helm of this group and the interaction with all the participants, I believe the time has come for a change in leadership.

At the last Board meeting, I broached this matter and recommended that the *KA* forum be merged with the book

discussion group, meeting every now and then, on Saturday afternoon. After all, it was Otchir Bold, one of our *KA* attending members, who one evening expressed an interest in forming such a group in a private talk with Tony Michels. From there it "grew its own wings."

As you may know from the occasional write-up in the *Staatsbote*, and the regular announcements in the Calendar of Events, book discussions and readings have been part and parcel of the *KA* series.

As a case in point, at our most recent session on Tuesday, November 16, Katie Thieck read from her book, and reported on her life in *Deutsch Südwest*, now officially known as *Namibia*.

As of this writing, I am pleased to report that Maria Sturm has agreed to take over the administrative leadership of the newly merged conversation and book discussion group. She will be assisted by Helga Halbfass, a regular attendant and contributor to our *KA-Runde*. Both, Maria and Helga, are serving on our Board of Directors.

I am sure their joint efforts will prove to be highly beneficial to this long established German forum. Maybe, on occasion they will ask me to give them a hand. I will gladly do that, if time permits.

Other than that, I am off to Washington, where new duties await me at the German American Heritage Foundation, and its recently established museum.

May the spirit of this Christmas season be with you and your family throughout the coming year.

- Hardy von Auenmueller

*President's Message Cont'd—*

One of our goals for the coming year is to grow our membership, so that we might fill our wonderfully restored Auditorium, the very comfortable Ratskeller or the classic Library space with active program participants. If you are still in need of a Christmas present for a friend or family member, may I suggest a Society membership gift? At a cost of \$ 75 for a family membership, it remains one of the best bargains around.

Let me wish all of you a very enjoyable Holiday Season and all the best for 2011. I hope we will be able to spend some time together at the Society.

Eine frohe und gesegnete Weihnacht,  
Ernest D. Weiler

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## A Changing of the Guard

His guiding hand will be sorely missed, but it is very much understandable that after ten years, Hardy von Auenmüller wants to let go of the responsibility of organizing the *Konversationsabende*.

At the same time, it makes sense to look at possible synergies between the *KA* and the recently established book club – which for now has meant newly recruiting Maria Sturm from the book club while having Helga Halbfass provide continuity from the *KA* side.

As to the immediate future, the book club will have its next meeting on January 29th, followed by a *KA* on February 23rd. In the future, both events could become more fluid – the *KA* as a venue for the discussion of untranslated German books, the book club as a forum also for non-fiction – all suggestions are welcome!

—Maria Sturm & Helga Halbfass

*Our Building Challenge Cont'd—*

far too short a time to complete a construction project of this scope – particularly considering that we have no backup for these facilities. During the planning and investigation phase, we discovered many unpleasant surprises hidden behind walls and multi-covered ceilings. This time we will do the renovation right and start from scratch.

We also discovered, while deconstructing the Schlaraffia room, that there is a need to waterproof the foundation walls of the building from the outside. Continuous water intrusion and humidity are compromising the structures behind all wall coverings in the basement.

We are applying for a grant to cover the cost for this “dig around the building and waterproof it” operation. This work will be done in sections of 20 to 25 feet and will start as soon as the

weather allows and grant money becomes available.

We will also continue to address the problem of building and visitor security. Volunteer workers recently completed the new security lighting system. We have also improved our alarm system and will install a video monitoring system to discourage unwanted visitors and monitor who is entering the facility.

In addition to the planning for these larger projects, there is an ongoing need for volunteers willing to fix smaller maintenance related issues and I would be happy to see more of you at our next spring clean up on Saturday, March 26<sup>th</sup> 2011.

*Frohe Weihnachten und einen guten Rutsch ins neue Jahr wünscht Ihnen allen*

—Tony Michels

## The Unexpected Generosity of Ulrich A. Both

We wish to share with you an authentic story about a generous long-time member of our Society who has been the inspiration and motivating force of two very important projects: the **Elevator Annex** to our building which makes all floors accessible to any mobility-challenged person, and an **Endowment Fund**—helping the Society to meet ongoing operational expenses, and assuring that the organization will continue for generations to come.

Sometimes we are oblivious to problems that beset us until they are brought to our attention by others. In a chance meeting several years ago, **Ulrich Both**, a venerable GSP mem-



ber, asked Dr. Beichl, "Does the German Society have an elevator yet?" When the response was negative, he simply asked further "Why not?"

Whereupon Dr. Beichl replied, "We have no funds," to which he received the rejoinder, "I can get you a signifi-

cant starting subsidy." Thus, Ulrich not only identified the problem, but also provided the solution. This is how the Elevator Project came about.

Ulrich also prevailed upon his long time friend and former business partner, **Hans Trustorff**, to join him in this venture. He readily acquiesced. He had been a frequent visitor to the library and saw that an elevator would facilitate those visits. The two partners provided a substantial portion of the funds needed for construction of our **Beichl Tower**, dedicated in the summer of 2009.

More recently, Ulrich Both met with Ernie Weiler. They discussed various topics, including the need to undertake several construction projects in the basement area, and most importantly to create an **Endowment Fund** which would help assure that the Society's past history, and the many contributions of German-Americans, would be memorialized for the future.

Just as he responded to Dr. Beichl, Ulrich's immediate reaction was, "How much do you need? And can these funds be used as seed money so that others may also give to this worthy cause?"

At our most recent *Stiftungsfest*, on November 6th, Ulrich Both—joined by his son, Ron, and daughter-in-law, Donna—presented us with a check for \$50,000. This is a most generous gift and a real benchmark for further fundraising!

**Who, then, is Ulrich Both?**

—Cont'd on page 6



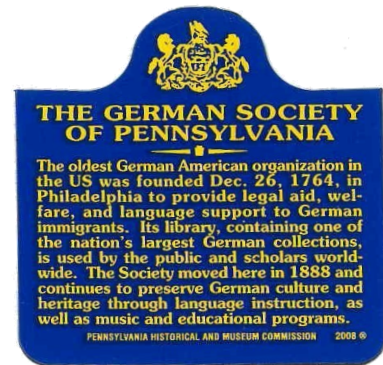
2010 Summer Camp for Kids  
"Meine Umwelt"



*Oktoberfest*  
September 18, 2010

## Social Gatherings of Young and Old

The wedding of Florian Zach and Iis Tusyadiah in May



German Society Historical Marker Magnets  
Look for them at our next event!

St. Martin's Parade for Families







A technician at Cunningham Piano Co. putting the finishing touches on our new Bösendorfer

Keynote Address  
by Congressman  
Jim Gerlach  
on German Unity



## Music at the German Society

*Duo Parisienne*  
performed on  
December 12



Piano Duo, Friederike  
Haufe and Stefan  
Ahmels on  
German Unity Day,  
October 3



Philadelphia Mummers at the 2010 Karnevalsparty  
Save the date for this event on March 5, 2011



Keystone State  
Boychoir  
singing an  
African  
spiritual on  
October 24



*"The Unexpected Generosity" Cont'd--*  
**Who, then, is Ulrich Both?**

He was born in Johannesburg, Ost-Preussen (East Prussia) in 1929.

Ten years before, that province had been separated from Prussia by the Treaty of Versailles, establishing the Polish Corridor. Königsberg, the capital of East Prussia, was the home of Immanuel Kant.

After World War II, that city was annexed by Russia, and became known as Kaliningrad.

The character of the East Prussians is well described by Hans Helmut Kirst in his book *Deutschland deine Ostpreussen*. He relates an incident which illustrates the respect that the East Prussians have for their elders, and their readiness to help them.

An old gentleman wanted to look at the memorial honoring Kant at a square in Königsberg during one of the busiest traffic periods. Cars pulled up, and two men alighted, one guiding the old man to the memorial while a traffic cop saluted them.

When the old man reached the memorial, he read aloud what was written there, about the two things that filled Kant with ever new and increasing admiration and respect:

*Der bestirnte Himmel über mir  
und das moralische Gesetz in mir*  
(The star-filled heaven above me  
and the moral law within me).

Every schoolchild in Königsberg knew this by heart.

In 1940, Ulrich moved with his family to Hamburg, where he served his ap-

prenticeship as a tool and die maker with the German Railroad. After migrating to Philadelphia in 1952, he was employed as a tool maker by Progressive, and then by Atlantic Manufacturing, Inc. Then he was drafted into the US Army, and served two years as corporal in Korea.

He married Ella Suttman in 1954, and continued his successful business career. Eventually, he founded the Turbo-machine Company in partnership with Hans Trustorff.

Thereafter, he established his own business, U.A.B. Manufacturing, for which he served as President until his retirement.

Ulrich and Ella have two sons, Ulrick and Ronald R., and four grandchildren, Rikki Lynn, Luke, Marissa and Elizabeth.

Ulrich was always proud of his German roots and became an active member of various German-American organizations. Among others, he was President of the Tricentennial Bikers which involved a bicycle built for twelve.

That unusual bike was always the featured attraction of the Steuben Parade in Philadelphia. It had been acquired from a group of residents of Krefeld, Germany who brought it here to celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Germantown by 13 Krefeld families in 1683.

The German Society has indeed been fortunate to have Ulrich Both as an involved member who recognized problem areas of the Society and initiated steps that provided solutions.

For his most generous support, we are ever so grateful.

-- G. Beichl & Ernie Weiler

## **Welcome to the New German Society Members**

We issue a hearty welcome to all of you and hope to see you at many of our exciting events scheduled for 2011!

—Sharan Knoell

### **ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS!**

**OUR GOAL IS THAT EACH  
OF YOU RECRUIT  
ONE NEW MEMBER  
TO THE SOCIETY DURING  
2011.**

**PLEASE HELP WITH THIS  
IMPORTANT DRIVE!**

## Calendar of Events

### December

Dec. 25—Jan. 2 Closed for Winter Holidays

### January 2011

- Sat. Jan. 8 Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting in the Ratskeller, 10:00am  
Sun. Jan. 9 "Wister and More!" Series presents Pianist Claire Huangci, 3:00pm  
Selections include Beethoven, Liszt, and Schumann  
Jan. 10 - Mar. 31 Winter Session of German Classes for Adults (beginner through advanced)  
Fri. Jan. 14 Friday Film Fest, "Wir Wunderkinder", 6:30pm, Shown in German with German subtitles  
Jan. 15—April 2 Winter Session of German Classes for Children (3-12 years old)  
Mon. Jan. 17 German Society Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00pm  
Fri. Jan. 21 Evening in the Black Forest at City Tavern with Chef Walter Staib, 6:00pm  
Supports the Women's Auxiliary of the German Society  
Sat. Jan. 29 Book Club Meeting, 1:30-3:00pm, Books: *Niederungen/Nadirs* by Herta Mueller and  
*Gemeindekind/Their Pavel* by Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach  
Sun. Jan. 30 "Wister and More!" Series presents American Virtuosi, 3:00pm  
Selections include Mozart, Franconer, Debussy, Borowsky

### February

- Sat. Feb. 5 Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting in the Ratskeller, 10:00am  
Fri. Feb. 11 Friday Film Fest, "Effi Briest", 6:30pm, Shown in German with German subtitles  
Mon. Feb. 21 Closed for President's Day  
Wed. Feb. 23 *Konversationsabend*, Topic TBA, 7:00pm

### March

- Sat. March 5 *Karnevalsparty*, 8:11pm  
Sun. March 6 "Wister and More!" presents the Wister Quartet, 3:00pm  
Selections include Mozart, Shostakovich, Schubert  
Fri. March 11 Friday Film Fest, "Romy", 6:30pm, Shown in German with German subtitles  
Sat. March 12 Book Club Meeting, 1:30-3:00pm, Title TBA  
Mon. March 21 German Society Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00pm  
Sat. March 26 Spring Clean-Up, 10am  
Sun. March 27 "Wister and More!" presents Delius Society Concert: Lloyd Smith (cello) and Davyd Booth (piano)  
Selections include Elgar, Delius, and Grieg

### April

- Sat. April 9 *Hamburger Abend*, 7pm—**Save the Date!**

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Pennsylvania**

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The **Neuer Pennsylvanischer Staats-  
bote** is published by the German Society of Pennsylvania. The German Society reserves the right to edit all submissions.

*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.*

**Celebrating 20 Years of German Unity**

**The Start of a New Congressional German American Initiative**

On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010 we hosted a gala concert commemorating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of German unity. For that event we brought over two very talented musicians, the piano duo **Friederike Haufe** and **Volker Ahmels**. They performed five pieces from various romantic composers whose lives were intertwined in true pan-European fashion. With **Volker** hailing from Hamburg and **Friederike's** Dresden family roots, they perfectly symbolized the reunification of Germany.

Our keynote speaker at that event was **Congressman Jim Gerlach**. He spoke of his German family roots in Pennsylvania, which have prompted him to organize an initiative in the House of Representatives to foster a greater appreciation of, and to fortify the German-American connection. A newly established congressional caucus will serve as an informal, bipartisan group dedicated to maintaining and strengthening the relationship between the US and Germany. It will emphasize the extensive economic ties between the two countries, and draw attention to the heritage of German-Americans as well as their achievements in building the United States.

After all, Germany is the third largest economy in the world and America's most important trading partner in Europe. Yet it plays hardly any role in the US media or politics. Nonetheless, according to the last US census, there are 43 million Americans claiming German ancestry. Thus, numerically German-Americans are the largest ethnic group in this country! —Hardy von Auenmueller