

Calendar of Events	
Thur. Mar. 19	Lecture: Lisa Minardi - "Pennsylvania German Fraktur: From A to Z", 6.30pm
Fri. Mar. 20	Friday FilmFest presents "Nachtzug 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: Marlen Haushofer's " <i>Die Wand/The Wall</i> ", 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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**The German Society**  
of Pennsylvania  
611 Spring Garden St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19123

**Address Service Requested**



# The German Society of Pennsylvania

Neuer Pennsylvanischer  
**Staatsbote**

CELEBRATING  
**250**  
YEARS OF  
**GERMAN  
HERITAGE**

**Spring 2015**

## President's Message

During our very cold winter days this February it seemed hard to believe that spring is just around the corner and on June 7<sup>th</sup> 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 250<sup>th</sup> 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 Staib was the *premier* event of the year. Let me thank our 250<sup>th</sup> 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 organizations such as the Styron Corporation, the Max Kade, Philadelphia and Arcadia Foundations, as well as the Dow Chemical Company who all provided special funding for this celebratory year. We exposed large audiences to our beautiful building and programs and we intend to build on the publicity and overall momentum 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 late last year, I am pleased to note that we have now collected \$ 630,000 and most importantly twenty-five members or families have indicated that the Society is in their wills. I am hopeful 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 Society after the June elections"? I expect to focus on two activities – first and foremost to continue with my efforts to build a meaningful endowment for the Society. I will also stay close to the five or six foundations which have generously supported our various needs in recent years. All of this of course depends whether the Board of Directors agrees to have me continue with these activities.

I should also note that with this issue of the *Staatsbote*, Hardy von Auenmueller will step back from his editor role after ten very productive years. He has done a masterful job writing interesting articles and worked efficiently with various contributors who submitted articles. He helped design the layout and was very much engaged and supported the printing and distri-

bution processes. We thank him and I am sure he will continue to provide a helping hand to Allen Krumm, who has agreed to take on the editor role. I am confident he will continue to submit an occasional article as well.

As indicated in a recent e-mail to our members, we are struggling to reach our \$60,000 goal for the Annual Fund Drive. We have a small team of directors who will make phone calls to potential donors, so you might expect a friendly call from one of them. It is also an opportunity to talk a bit about the Society and obtain some much needed feedback from our membership.

At our last Board Meeting we had an interesting discussion around how to classify and to recognize different kinds of gifts to the Society. Donations, such as cash or stocks, to the Annual Fund are always appreciated and covered by thank-you letters. Gifts-in-kind or specific projects funded at the Society are acknowledged indicating that we followed the donor's intention and issue a proper statement for tax purposes, but these donations will not be counted as Annual Fund contributions.

This past year, Tony Michels worked diligently on several capital improvement projects mainly funded by grants. At times, expenditures rose beyond the projected costs for a variety of reasons. As reported previously, Tony was or is compensated for this work, albeit at a favorable and reduced rate. Yet during our current fiscal year, he donated documented expenses amounting to \$8,600, which were acknowledged as gifts-in-kind and for which we are most grateful. Here too, an appropriate tax statement was prepared.

I should add that over the past few years he has done a good number of hands-on repairs at the Society for which he was not compensated, and therefore, saved us significant costs. We thank him for sharing his special talents with us and hope he can and will be able to do so in the future — now that he is our candidate for President of the German Society for the next two year term.  
-Ernie Weiler

## Chairman's Farewell

In Fall 1999, when we moved to Philadelphia from Summit, NJ, I knew neither my way around town nor much about the German Society. 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 wonderful collection. Annke was also a very persuasive 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 experience, I realized that this country is indeed a land of opportunity. Where else could you move in your career from the position of a Dishwasher to President, within such a short period of time? During those early years of volunteering, I met quite a few people who also joyfully pitched in. Many of them were couples, such as Frank & Renate 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, last but not least, Ernie Weiler. (If I 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 effort. Thanks to that spirit, and with utmost fiscal 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 invaluable support – benefitting our beloved Society, and me personally. I have recently added up in my mind the monetary value of the volunteering efforts rendered by these early colleagues, including their cash and in-kind donations, during those ten years, and arrived at a staggering 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 received from the younger people who joined our Board in recent years, that sum may well exceed 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 referred to as *troika*. While we didn't feel in any manner regal – and hopefully did not appear that way to others, we had our regular, weekly meetings during which all the challenges and opportunities of the Society were discussed at great length. Our efforts to find common ground were not always crowned with success. That was to be expected, considering the differences in personalities and professional careers. In the end though, a consensus was mostly reached.

As you may appreciate, no one is so exposed to the obstinacy of events as the people charged



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 expand our program to a ten-concert season. Beyond that, we have been able to present the occasional German stage play as well as a few exhibits – on loan from the German-American Heritage Museum in Washington..

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 250<sup>th</sup> 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 re-

nowned 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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.

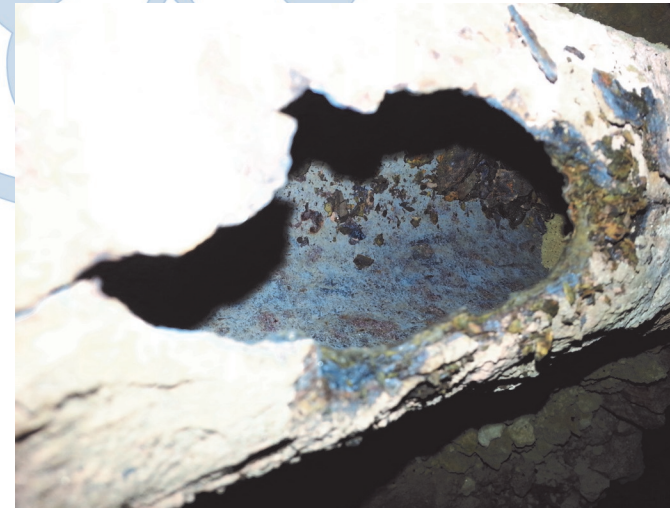
As a first step in that direction, I have decided – with this issue – to step down as publisher/editor of our newsletter, after ten long years. It is a pleasure to tell you that Allen Krumm has agreed to take over that job. As a long-time Board colleague, he has amply demonstrated his excellent writing 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 Auenmueller

## Building News

As much as I like to share pictures of the ongoing building projects in the Staatsbote, it is difficult this time around to find a "scenic" photo that depicts one of the biggest advances in recent German Society building history.



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 250<sup>th</sup> 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 16<sup>th</sup>, please come to the museum, open Tuesdays to Saturdays from 10:30am to 4:30pm. It is located at 15 South 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

Incidentally, the German Society's former headquarters were located just across the street at 24 South 7<sup>th</sup> 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



## Annual Members Meeting and Election

The Annual Meeting of the Members of the German Society of Pennsylvania is scheduled to be held on Sunday, June 7, 2015 at 3:00 pm.

Upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee and with approval of the Board of Directors, you will note several proposed changes to the Executive Committee structure. This was necessitated by the expiring terms of the current Chairman, President and Executive Vice President. Also, as you will have noted earlier in the newsletter, Tony Michels, the current Executive Vice President is running for President. Both the short and long term needs of the German Society were evaluated as well as the talents and prior contributions of Board members, to determine the best possible structure to ensure the Society flourishes as we begin the next 250-year chapter of our history.

As a reminder, the by-laws require only a President, a Secretary and a Treasurer. Vice Presidents can be designated based on the needs of the organization at the time. Therefore, three new/revised roles have been established:

- To continue to ensure the long-term financial viability of the Society, with the ongoing need to build upon the Endowment Fund he started, Ernie Weiler will continue his work by accepting the nomination for Vice President, Development. Ongoing grant-writing will also be part of his responsibility.

### Candidates: Officers

#### Tony Michels - President



The past six years that I have spent as Executive Vice President in close cooperation in a kind of "triarchy" with Ernie and Hardy have been challenging, rewarding and productive. Many thanks to the Board, to the active members and to my

- 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 Auenmueller 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 2013-2016 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

wife for their continued support.

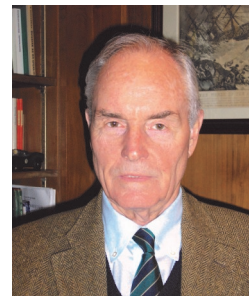
Managing the day-to-day business of the German Society and supervising the ongoing building projects have become a full-time job and the challenging condition of the building continues to be a source of surprises. I have conscientiously stewarded and brought to completion the necessary building projects and repair work, both expected and unexpected, in our

building. I view it as an exciting challenge for me to continue to serve the German Society by planning and supervising future projects with an emphasis on sustainable, ecological building practices and have developed valuable contacts in this area.

I still have many other ideas for continued development in the German Society that need to be initiated and nurtured. Improving the visibility of the German Society in Philadelphia and beyond should continue to be one of our top priorities during the next two years. In addition, I wish to continue to focus on the development of more events that appeal to a wide range of people interested in German culture.

I would be honored to support the further development of the German Society for the next two years as President and will continue to make the most useful contribution I possibly can.

#### 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 250<sup>th</sup> 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 im-

provements 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 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations – for example, continuing the lecture series – and in general organizing contributions to major historical milestones, whether they are imminent – like the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of German Reunification – or further into the future, like the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Library in 2017, a year which will also see the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of American entry into World War I – 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!



### Low Volgenau - VP of Finance and Treasurer

250 Years. We can be proud of our history and

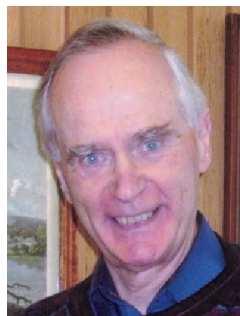


that we are the only one of the Colonial Societies who has their own building. But what of the future? We need to continue to develop and grow our programs for the next generations. Basic to our mission is the implicit understand-

ing 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 appear-



ance 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 250<sup>th</sup> 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 Committees. 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 Com-

monwealth and the nation. If re-elected, I shall continue to champion, and do what I can to further that role.

### Petra 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 particular 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





wine too!). Since joining GSP about 20 years ago, I have volunteered by serving food at several Christmas bazaars, painting the interior and exterior of our treasured building, and chaperoning events. As a Board member, I have served on the nominating committee, helped to lead efforts to create our endowment, create annual strategic plans for each committee, and a 5-year Capital Spending Plan. Because I believe that for organizations like the GSP to prosper, members must give their work, wealth and wisdom, I accept the invitation to stand for a third Board term. I will do my best to further the understanding of German and German American contributions to the growth of American history and culture.

### Jim Niessen

My grandfather's family settled a few blocks



from the Society in 1893 and he and two brothers later became members. Research on my family first drew me to the German Society, and in 2010 and 2014 I organized workshops on German family history in the Horner Library. I'm an historian and

librarian at Rutgers University in New Brunswick and a member of the Steering Committee of the German-North American Resources Partnership. These interests drew me into the Society's Library Committee.

As a continuing Board member I want to ensure the Board continues to give well-informed attention to issues related to heritage, research, and collections.

## 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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

Dr. George Beichl



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 Trustsdorf, 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:

Names removed from online version

-Ernie Weiler

Annual Fund Donors\*

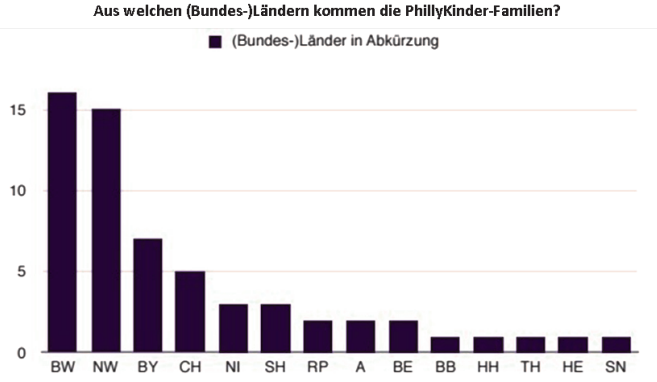
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Die Schlaun Föchse auf den Spuren ihrer deutschsprachigen Herkunftsländer

Woher stammen eigentlich die PhillyKinder-Familien?

Nachdem wir in der letzten Ausgabe des Staatsboten über die Entstehung der PhillyKinder reflektiert hatten, haben die "Schlaun Föchse 2" (4.-7.Klasse) zu Beginn des Schuljahres 2014-15 eine Umfrage (siehe Abbildung: Statistik vom 16.10.14) durchgeführt, aus welchen (Bundes-)Ländern unsere Familien stammen. Jakob T., einer unserer Schüler, kommentierte zum Ergebnis: "Die meisten PhillyKinder-Familien stammen aus Baden-Württemberg (16 Familien), knapp gefolgt von Nordrhein-Westfalen (15). Nordrhein-Westfalen hat die meisten Einwohner, und von daher ist es keine Überraschung."



Eine fiktive Reise durch deutschsprachige Länder

Nach dieser Einführung haben wir uns auf eine Reise durch unsere "Herkunftsländer" begeben. Alle Schüler wurden "Experten" eines (Bundes-)Landes und teilten ihr Wissen mit ihren Klassenkameraden. Von Mia H. lernten wir typische Schweizer Wörter wie *Grüezi* = Hallo, Herdöpfel = Kartoffel, Rübli = Karotte, und bei der Aufzählung traditioneller Gerichte wie Raclette, Fondue, Rösti und Schoggi lief uns das Wasser im Mund zusammen. Der Schweizer Nationalfeiertag ist der 1. August, berühmte Sportler sind Xherdan Shaqiri und Roger Federer, Schweizer Kinder lesen Heidi und Schellenursli, und dann sind da natürlich die Alpen! Mia selbst würde am Liebsten "einen Ausflug zum Matterhorn machen oder nach Genf oder Bern".

Die Reise ging weiter nach Österreich. Auch

hier wurde der Gaumen mächtig verwöhnt: Germknödel, Apfelstrudel, Kaiserschmarrn, Marillenknödel, Mohnnudeln - das waren einige der Köstlichkeiten, die uns Nathalie und Vincent aufzählten. Dann die Musik: ob Donauwalzer oder W.A. Mozart, die Künstler wie Hundertwasser oder G. Klimt, ganz zu schweigen von alten und neuen Berühmtheiten wie Kaiser Franz Josef, Sissi oder Arnold Schwarzenegger - Österreich hat mit vielen Höhepunkten aufzuwarten! Mit Vincents Worten: "Ich würde in der Stadt spazieren gehen, die hohen Berge hinaufklettern und viele leckere Wiener Schnitzel essen". Und Nathalie: "Sehen würde ich gerne alle alten Gebäude mit ihren geheimen Gängen und Zimmern".

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, Ravensburg (Entstehungsort des weltbekannten Puzzlespiels) 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".

Nun kam Bayern an die Reihe, flächenmäßig das größte Bundesland. Isabel B. gab nicht nur ihre bayrischen Sprachkenntnisse preis (von Griaß di, Bub und Servus, Semmeln hin zu Fleischpflanzerl), sondern sie erzählte uns auch von berühmten Leuten wie Roy Black oder Thomas Gottschalk, die dort geboren sind und von Sehenswürdigkeiten wie dem Olympiastadion in München und den Schlössern des König Ludwigs. Am Liebsten würde Isabel noch Nürnberg besichtigen. Nur reichte dafür die Zeit nicht mehr.

Anschließend ging die Reise weiter nach Nordrhein-Westfalen. Bruno B. hat sich auf den Fußball spezialisiert und uns eingehend über Otto Rehhagel informiert. Bruno kommentiert über sein Land auch: "Ich mag, dass man in diesem Bundesland alles findet, sowohl große

Städte als auch Bauernhöfe. Ich möchte gerne noch einmal den Kölner Dom besuchen".

Wir haben auch die Stadtstaaten nicht vergessen: Noah I. gab ein bisschen Hamburger Plattdeutsch preis und ließ uns raten, was *Brotbüddel* und *Döntjes* wohl bedeuten könnte. Noah: "Ich will gerne den Hafen von Hamburg sehen."

Dann besichtigten wir Bremens Wahrzeichen auf dem Rathausplatz: den Ritter Roland und die Bremer Stadtmusikanten. Außerdem informierte uns unsere Bremenexpertin Monica D. über die Bedeutung des silbernen Schlüssels auf dem Bremer Stadtwappen, das Symbol des Apostel Petrus. Grünkohl mit Pinkel ist nach wie vor das traditionelle Bremer Essen.

Was wäre eine Reise durch Deutschland ohne die Hauptstadt Berlin? Ben S. führte uns durch die Museumsinsel, zum Schloss Charlottenburg, zum Brandenburger Tor und durch das neue Regierungsviertel. Wir besuchten die Internationale Funkausstellung, wurden über die Grüne Woche informiert, während wir an einer Imbissbude echte Currywurst genossen und die Erwachsenen dabei eine Berliner Weiße mit Waldmeister oder Himbeersirup tranken. Die Berliner konnten wir leider nicht mehr probieren, da hätten wir auf die Faschingszeit warten müssen! Am Interessantesten für unseren Experten war nach wie vor die Besichtigung der Berliner Mauer, auch wenn davon heute nur noch einige wenige Teile stehen.



Schließlich ging es in die Neuen Bundesländer: Von der Glienicker Brücke führte uns unsere Brandenburgexpertin Kaelyn K. nach Potsdam

zum Schloss Sanssouci - ein beeindruckendes Schloss mit großen Gärten aus der Zeit von Friedrich II. Nach dem Genuss echter Spree-wälder Gurken setzten wir unsere Reise in Richtung Thüringen fort und erfuhren von Joanna S., dass von dort die gläsernen Kugeln stammen, mit denen wir unsere Weihnachts-bäume schmücken, und aus denselben Glas-bläserwerkstätten kommen ursprünglich auch die Ferngläser, Mikroskope, und Linsen für Planetarien, für die Thüringen heute weltweit bekannt ist. Nach einer leckeren Thüringer Bratwurst folgten wir Joannas Wunsch, im Thüringer Wald wandern zu gehen.

Unsere Tour endete in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Jakob T. machte uns ganz Mecklenburg schmackhaft und zeigte uns "die schönsten ostdeutschen Strände auf der sonni-gen Insel Usedom, oder in der Nähe des be-rühmten Königstuhl-Felsens auf Rügen". Auch ließ er andere Sehenswürdigkeiten wie die Müritz und die Mecklenburgische Seenplatte nicht aus, wo man "sehr gut wandern, Rad fahren und schwimmen kann".

Nach dieser vielfältigen Reise entspannten wir uns mit deutschen Sagen und begannen zu den Schlössern, die wir besichtigt hatten, unsere eigenen Geschichten aus dem Mittelalter aus-zudenken. Mehr dazu in einer anderen Aus-gabe.

Wir danken allen, die uns auf dieser Reise be-gleitet haben, und freuen uns darauf, am 3. Ok-tober im Rahmen einer Feier zum 25. Jahr-estag der deutschen Wiedervereinigung einige unserer Projekte aus dem PhillyKinder-Schuljahr 2014/15 vorzustellen, von Interviews mit Zeitzeugen bis zu einem Theaterstück - vielen von uns sind die Begriffe BRD und DDR nur aus dem Geschichtsbuch bekannt, für an-dere sind sie noch immer Teil der eigenen Le-bensgeschichte - auf alle Fälle wünschen wir uns eine spannende Diskussion!

— Sonja Srama-Souder und Maria Sturm