

**Newsletter April-May 2003****Volume I, Issue 39****Page 1****OUR SOCIETY MEMBERS PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE IN SGAS 2003 CONVENTION IN BALTIMORE AREA**

Dr. Randall Donaldson, professor of modern languages at Loyola College, is the principal organizer of this year's international convention of the Society for German American Studies, to be held in Baltimore April 24-26 at the Timonium campus of Loyola College (adjacent to the Holiday Inn). Many of our other members will be making presentations of historical and literary topics at the convention: Gary Grassl will speak on Jamestown, VA., the first port of immigration for Germans. Bradley Miller will address German immigration to Washington, D.C. Phil Hildbrandt will lecture on Mencken House. Rev. Joseph Rossi, S. J. will lecture on German Catholics in Baltimore. Rev. Dr. Holger Roggelin will speak on Pastor Julius Hoffman and the Zionskirche.

Other members of our Society who are engaged in preparations and arrangements for the event are: Prof. Dr. Volker Schmeissner, Hon. Gerard Wm Wittstadt, Dr. Rosemary K. Wittstadt, Ronald J. Zimmerman, Bob Sheppard, Merl E. Arp, Rev. Dr. Eric Gritsch, Theodore J. Potthast, Jr. and the principal organizer, Dr. Randall Donaldson.

Members of the Society are invited to attend the event. Copies of the program may be obtained by calling Natalie Rcook in the office of Prof. Donaldson at Loyola College at 410-617-2299. A registration form is printed on page 8. This lists the available bus tours and list of some of the topics which will be presented at the lectures.

**BALTIMORE WELCOMES SOCIETY FOR GERMAN AMERICAN STUDIES**

For the first time, the national convention of SGAS will be held in Baltimore. Its members include scholars from many universities in the United States and Europe, as well as non-academics who have an interest in German-American history. Last year the convention was held in Bremerhaven, Germany, a port of departure for many immigrants to America.

The theme of the lectures at the convention is the ports of entry for German immigrants. Baltimore was a principal destination for Germans coming to the USA. Baltimore's Locust Point rivaled Ellis Island as a place of debarkation. For many years, The German Society of Maryland was charged with the care of German-speaking immigrants. The captain of each ship was required to pay a tax of \$2 to the State of Maryland for each immigrant, and the money was given to our Society to aid the immigrants.

**ANNUAL MEETING FRIDAY APRIL 25**

Members are reminded to mark their calendars to attend our annual meeting in the dining room of Zion Church. It is preceded by a complimentary dinner for members, their families and guests. Notice of the meeting has been mailed to all members. Come to hear the status of the Society, reports of its activities and plans for the future. The annual meeting is always a wonderful social event at which you can meet other members in a very relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

**APRIL 2003 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 2****KALENDER****April 23 - Annual banquet Historical Society****April 25 - Annual Meeting German Society****April 26 - Bus trip of German Baltimore****April 24-27, 2003 SGAS convention in Baltimore****April 27 - Blob's Park 75th anniversary celebration****May 3 - 50th anniversary banquet, Kickers Club****May 4 - AGAS 34th Annual German Festival = Blob's****May 16 - High School German Language Awards at Zion****June 1 -(Sunday) Annual Picnic at Blob's Park**

**Aug. 15-16-17 Annual German Festival-Carroll Park**

**Nov.8 - (Saturday) Annual Awards Banquet at Towson University**

**Nov.9 - AGAS 4th Annual German Heritage Fest-Blob's**

Tune in to the Sunday German Radio hour **Edelweiss**: Radio 730 AM Sunday 9 am

For more local German-American happenings, check the web site of the Deutschamerikanischer **Bürgerverein** von Maryland: [www.md-germans.org](http://www.md-germans.org) the website of AGAS: [www.geocities.com/agas\\_dc/](http://www.geocities.com/agas_dc/) and our own Society's website [www.germansociety-md.com](http://www.germansociety-md.com)

## **SOCIETY'S EXHIBIT TO DEBUT AT CONVENTION, ANNUAL MEETING**

The Board of Directors commissioned a committee to plan and execute an exhibit to tell the story of our Society, to make its first appearance at the annual convention of the Society for German American Studies in Timonium on April 24. It will also be brought to the annual meeting to inspire our own members. The exhibit is being prepared by a professional firm, Prodisplays, Inc., which specializes in museum exhibits and presentations for commercial trade shows. The material to be included in the exhibit was prepared under the supervision of director Edwin Wenck, Esq., (lawyer, minister and artist) and director and vice president Brigitte Voelkel Fessenden (architect and city planner). Other members of the committee are president Jim Schaub and directors Harry Gruel, Dick Ackler and Ted Potthast, assisted by Katie Schaub, art student at the University of Maryland.

## **ANNUAL PICNIC SUNDAY JUNE 1**

Our Society's annual picnic will again be held at Blob's Park, with music by Das Meister Due. In addition to lots of beer, German food, soft drinks, etc., we will have singing and polkas, games and contest for children and grown-ups, with a special prize to be awarded to the winning horse-shoe-pitching team. Everyone is eligible to join in. Tickets at \$15. Students \$10

## **SIGN UP FOR BUS TOUR OF GERMAN BALTIMORE APRIL 26**

As part of our Society's welcoming of the SGAS convention to Baltimore, we have put together a motor coach tour highlighting city sites significant to our German heritage. Word of mouth brought an unexpected response, so we have scheduled 2 tours, one commencing at 10:30 am, leaving from Zion Church, City Hall Plaza, and the second at 3 pm from the convention headquarters at the Loyola College Campus in Timonium. Dean Krimmel, museum curator and professional city tour guide, will map the route and address the participants aboard the motor coach. Some of the stops will include a view of the city from the top of Federal Hill to see the locations of the immigration docks and point out the German parts of the city, Otterbein Church, the oldest church building in the city, Hansa House, The Mencken House, St. Alphonsus (known as the "German Cathedral") and other historic places. Call our office 410-685-0450 and leave your name and phone number and we will call you back to sign you up for the tour and answer your questions.

## **BLOB'S PARK 75 YEARS OLD**

German Americans from the Baltimore-Washington area have been partying at Blob's Park for 75 years and April 27 is the day to help them celebrate. Music will be provided by The Continentals. Our Society has been holding our annual picnic there for several years and will do so again on June 1. Max Blob, a Bavarian immigrant, bought the 220 acre farm and turned it into a meeting point for German Americans. Max built a large hall where beer flows and German food is abundant. Each weekend the hall features live German music by bands from far and near. The institution is now operated by Max's niece, Katherine Eggerl, a long-time member of our Society. The park is located off I-295 and Md Rt. 175. Congratulations, Katherine!

## **VISIT THE MAYPOLE AT ZION**

The Baltimore Kickers Club and Zion Church will hold a **Maifest** at the church on Saturday, May 10, and will raise the Maypole. The Maypole can be seen in most German villages, and is a sign that the good weather has arrived and outdoor activities are in season. In some parts of the Rhineland, you will see cut trees leaning against the home of a young maiden of marriageable age, placed there by a young swain seeking her hand. Zion's Maifest will feature good German food, drink and music.

## **APRIL -MAY 2003 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 3**

### **LOUIS HENRY KOHLMAN**

April 15, 1935 - April 1, 2003

Lou Kohlman seldom missed a German Society function. He came to our ecumenical service, our Kirchengang, our picnic and always filled a table for our annual awards banquet. He contributed ideas for our programs. He cherished his German heritage. He was a deeply religious man and a great American. He died of cancer on April 1, 2003, survived by his daughter Cynthia and his son, Michael. Two years ago he retired from a life-long career with the Dept. of Juvenile Services of the State of Maryland, an organization to which he devoted great efforts to try to reform. He was a staunch supporter of the Republican party, and worked long hours to help elect fellow German-Society member, Bob Ehrlich, as Maryland's governor. He joined with 3 other members in putting an "Elect Ehrlich" ad in the program for our annual awards banquet. Lou loved a good party where Gemütlichkeit flowed freely.

Lou learned he had terminal cancer on February 11. He wanted to attend our annual meeting on April 25 and had bought a ticket to the historical society's banquet on April 23. On Feb. 17 he wrote to us:

*"... If I am unable to attend the dinner on April 23, my daughter Cindy will attend in my place. If I attend, I will need another ticket for Cynthia...How I cherish our friendship and all the German Society activities. Please tell my friend, Jerry Wittstadt, I would appreciate it very much if Cindy, myself, Pastor Ken Homer and my pastor, Kevin Guillory could all sit at the same table.*

*I so look forward to crossing the Rubicon and being in paradise with Jesus. It is written: 'Damit alle, die an ihn glauben, das ewige Leben haben. Denn also hat Gott die Welt geliebt, dass er seinen eingebornen Sohn gab, damit alle, die an ihn glauben, nicht verloren werden, sondern das ewige Leben haben. John 3:15'.*

*God bless America . God bless you. Lou"*

## SCHILLER'S PLAY RECOMMENDED

Maureen Helinski, one of our directors and a teacher of German, recommends to our members the stage play *Mary Stuart* by Friedreich Schiller, at Center Stage in Baltimore from April 4 to May 4. The classic play has been translated from German by Robert David MacDonald. The plot: deposed queen condemned for treason, fights for the chance to plead her case before Elizabeth I, her enemy, cousin and would-be executioner. Plots and passion play out as the two prepare for the face-off to decide the fate of a nation. Center Stage is located at 700 N. Calvert Street . Phone: 410-332-0033. Schiller is one of Germany 's greatest playwrights.

## ATTITUDE TOWARD GERMANY :

German-Americans had their emotions torn apart when our country fought Germany is WWI and WWII. In those days, there was a great sorrow that our countries were at war against one another. Now comes the war against Iraq , and our countries find each other on opposite sides of the spectrum, with Germany among the nations which verbally attack the USA . The reaction of German-Americans today is not that of sadness, but either anger or sympathy, depending upon the views of the individual. A large number of German-Americans support our country's action against Saddam Hussein. They express anger against Germany. "Conservative" radio talk show hosts heap vituperation upon the French and Germans and urge listeners to boycott their products.

## GERMAN ATTITUDE TOWARD USA

CNN television reported on March 26 that some German restaurants have taken Coca Cola and Budweiser beer off their menus, refuse American Express credit cards and posted signs that Americans are not welcome. Some are boycotting McDonald's restaurants and are urging Germans not to travel to the USA . A member of our Society invited German relatives for a visit this summer and was met with the reply "not this year." The reason: fear that the USA will be the target of more terrorist attacks. Another member of our Society recently visited Germany and reported that anti-Americanism is prevalent there.

On the other hand, The Baltimore Sun reported, also on March 26, that DHL, a mail unit of the German post office, bought Airborne, Inc. for 1.05 billion dollars, to compete in the US market.

Germany's Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, who was elected on an anti-American platform, on April 3, finally agreed that Saddam Hussein should be deposed, even though he still condemns the USA attack on Iraq. Amerika Woche, a German American, reported on April 7 that German Bundespresident Johannes Rau warned anti-war demonstrators not to hate America. And as of this writing, ex-POW Jessica Lynch is still in a hospital in Germany.

## NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS

**CONGRATULATIONS** to **Diane Geppi-Aikens**, coach of the Loyola College women's lacrosse team, which as we go to press is ranked #1 in the USA with a record of 12-0. In past years, Diane has taken her team to compete in places as far away as Ireland and Australia.

## APRIL -MAY 2003 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 4

### MERGENTHALER VO-TECH CELEBRATES 50 YEARS:

Ottmar Mergenthaler, our Society's world-famous member, was known as the "Second Gutenberg" for his invention of the linotype machine. It was a form of typewriter which set type and revolutionized the printing industry. Newspapers, which were previously limited to about 8 pages, moved into the modern era and books became plentiful. The linotype machine was used for nearly a hundred years until being replaced by computers.

In 1953 Baltimore City opened Mergenthaler Vocational-Technical High School , through the merger of 3 high schools: Mergenthaler School of Printing, Clara Barton Vocational and Edison Vocational High Schools . The 50th anniversary was celebrated on April 5, 2003 with an open house at which visitors could observe the facilities and purchase baked goods and other items made by the students. It is located on Hillen Road in Northeast Baltimore .

The school, popularly called simply "Mervo", is a gigantic facility, with 3½ miles of workshops, training labs, kitchens, repair centers, computer rooms, offices and classrooms. It has kept pace with a dynamic and demanding society. Fifty per cent of its graduates go on the college. It offers 17 majors, including computer-aided drafting, plumbing, electrical construction and maintenance, cosmetology, commercial baking, automotive repair, business and administrative technology and computer programming. Ottmar can be proud of the

school bearing his name.

## **FREEDOM: DO GERMANS HAVE MORE OF IT THAN AMERICANS?**

It appeared that way to a group of teenagers from a school near Hamburg , Germany as they and their American classmates were frisked upon entering a public building in Annapolis . Sun columnist Michael Olesker reported on April 10 that the visiting students were perplexed by the uniformed officers who made them empty their pockets and pass through a metal detector, a process which we Americans now take for granted to get into a courthouse or many public buildings. The teacher asked the kids whether they had such security features in Germany and a young German girl asked "Why? Why should we have?"

Some of us who have had to enter a courthouse lately have encountered a few guards with an "attitude" who make the experience rather unpleasant.

## **NORTHEAST SÄNGERFEST MAY 24 IN WILMINGTON, DELAWARE**

Every three years the German singing societies hold a regional singing concert. This year the "Sängerfest" will be held in Wilmington , DE in the grand ballroom of the Wyndham Hotel, 700 King Street at 4 p.m. on Sunday, May 24. The mass concert will include 500 singers from 25 German choral groups from Philadelphia , Delaware , New York, Long Island , Washington,, Baltimore and other cities. The music consists of men's, women's and mixed groups, and it spans the diversity of German music from Mozart and Schubert to folk songs and operetta selections. Baltimore will be represented by The Arion Gesangverein, whose president, Robert Karl Fritschke, is a member of the Board of Directors of our Society. Choral singing societies have been a German American tradition for more than 200 years. The Arion Gesangverein performed in Gettysburg when Abraham Lincoln gave his famous address. The public is invited to attend. Tickets are \$10. For information call Bob Fritschke at 410-665-4135.

## **CHECK OUR NEW WEBSITE**

Maureen Helinski, a director of our Society, has begun a website for the Society. Maureen refers to it as a "primitive" website which contains some basic information about the Society and which she plans to add to as she gets time. The website name: [www.germansociety-md.com](http://www.germansociety-md.com)

## **A PROJECT FOR OUR MEMBERS**

Two years ago the demise of Haussner's restaurant, the premier German food emporium in Baltimore , was the culmination of a series of German restaurants which have gone out of business over the past half century. There are still a few good German restaurants around, such as Rudy's near Westminster and Josef's in Fallston, but they are scattered and take some traveling.

The recent celebration in Baltimore of the legacy of St. Petersburg sent newspaper reporters scouting the area for restaurants with typical Russian meals on their menus, and they found quite a few. Enough to write some articles and feature them on a website.

This triggered an idea for a project for our members. Send us the name and address of a good restaurant in Maryland which has German dishes on its menu. List the dish you recommend. Tell us something about the place. We will put them on our website and make this a regular feature in our newsletter. And we'll give you the credit for your discovery.

## **APRIL 2003 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 5**

### **HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL DINNER-LECTURE: SCHNITZEL BANK**

On April 23 at the Preston Room, members and guests of the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland will see and hear a presentation by Dr. William D. Keel of the University of Kansas entitled "Was ist eine Schnitzel Bank." Many of our members have fond memories of an Opa leading the family in singing the Schnitzel Bank song, pointing to a chart with pictures of pigs, fat ladies and skinny men, etc..

Our members are invited to the event. Cocktails and hot hors d'oeuvres (cash bar), followed by a beef dinner (or chicken, if you wish) at 7:30 . Tickets are \$49 each. Send your check (payable to Soc. for History of Germans in MD) to Treasurer, 926 Breezewick Circle , Towson , MD 21286 . This event is always entertaining and the atmosphere pleasant.. We heartily recommend that you attend.

### **DR. KEEL COMMENTS ON LOCAL SCHNITZELBANK PRODUCTIONS**

Dr. Keel is the speaker at the April 23 banquet of our sister society, The Society for the History of the Germans in MD., and will present the history of the Schnitzelbank song (an American, not a German work). We sent him copies of our Society's version, along with some old saloon hand-outs published by the defunct Gunther's brewery and Arrow Beer. Dr. wrote:

"I am constantly amazed at the variety of these charts and how widespread the song was and still is. The one from the Gunther brewery is particularly interesting . It appears quite similar to one that I have from 1907 on some piano sheet music for the "Schnitzel -bank Two Step." Dr. Keel was happy to learn that the Schnitzelbank song is still sung at our Society picnics.

## GERMAN CONNECTION FOUND FOR MOTHER LANGE, FOUNDRESS

While we did not find any German roots for Mother Mary Lange, who founded an order of black nuns in Baltimore in the early 1800's, we learned that her order was saved from extinction by the leader of the German Catholic community, Fr. John Neumann. When the priest who helped found the order died, the nuns had no chaplain. The archbishop of Baltimore wanted to disband the order. Father John N. Neumann (now known as Saint John Neumann), sent a young German priest, Fr. Anwander, to serve as chaplain. He helped the order survive and thrive. The order presently operates a girls high school, St. Frances Academy in the inner city.

## PRIDE IN OUR POET-MEMBER

Ingeborg Carsten-Miller's poem was first read in 1994 for the German Heritage Society of Washington; later for the SGAS in Bremerhaven, Germany in 2001, and in 2002 in the German American Friendship Garden.

## APRIL-MAY. 2003 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 6

### "GREISENHEIM": HOME OF THE GRAY ONES, NOW "EDENWALD"

Not very long ago, German Americans spoke of an "old age home" as a Greisenheim, a home for the gray haired people. Baltimore's "German Aged People's Home" was located at 22 South Athol Avenue. It needed replacement and the management decided to build a new home in Towson, and to change the name to "Edenwald". (In German, "Wald" is a forest, and Eden is as in the "garden of"). The Athol Avenue property was sold and the proceeds went into the new Edenwald, which undertook to take in all the old folks who were living in the Greisenheim and care for them for their lifetimes. In the program for our Society's 200th anniversary banquet (1983), the following ad appeared:

### IMMIGRANTS CHANGE OF NAMES MAKE SEARCHES DIFFICULT

We are working on a project to determine the percentage of German Americans in the Baltimore area by studying the death notices in the newspaper. The project cannot be accurate because so many of the German immigrants "anglicized" their names. Müllers became Millers; Fuchs became Fox; Schmidt became Smith, etc. Other European nationalities did the same. Judith Martin ("Miss Manners"), in her new book *Star Spangled Manners* wrote: "Many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century immigrants changed their family names, sometimes involuntarily at the insistence of impatient immigration officials or already assimilated relatives to make them sound American, which is to say English. Shedding foreign or ethnic associations in the hope of disappearing into a fully American identity was one motive, and providing a sound that other Americans could easily pronounce was another."

This explains why it is difficult to get some Americans of German heritage to embrace our ethnic organizations. Their forbears wanted to escape from their pasts.

### SCHNAUFFER, FIRST MARYLAND PUBLISHER TO OPPOSE SLAVERY

At a time when no English language newspaper in Maryland came out against slavery, CARL HEINRICH SNAUFFER took a strong anti-slavery position in his daily German-language abolitionist paper, the "Baltimore Wecker."

Schnauffer, born near Stuttgart in 1823, was a poet, soldier, freedom-fighter and a Forty-Eighter who was exiled from his Fatherland after an unsuccessful revolution in Baden. He came to Baltimore in 1851, married Elise Moos and started his newspaper, but died of typhoid fever in 1854 after three short years in America. His widow continued publishing the Baltimore Wecker. At the outbreak of the civil war, a mob stormed the Wecker offices, smashing its windows. At that moment, Mrs. Schnauffer with her child in her arms stepped out of the building to face the mob, and her appeal to their better natures caused them to abandon further destruction. Schnauffer's wife and his brother published his collected poems in Baltimore in 1879. A lecture on the life of Carl Schnauffer was presented by Prof. A. E. Zucker at the 1939 annual meeting of The Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland and published in Report #24.