

NEWSLETTER ISSUE 49

January-February, 2005

SOCIETY SEEKS ARCHIVIST TO FINISH WORK OF V. P. FESSENDEN

Our first vice president, Brigitte Voelkel Fessenden, has spent several years poring through our Society's archives, segregating those in need of preservation and sifting the wheat from the chaff. She now has our documents and papers in a condition in which a professional archivist needs to be brought in to complete her work. The task of the archivist will be : to review, process and conserve materials, design a record database; design digital image database; to coordinate volunteers; to make recommendations for conserving, storing and displaying of our materials; and suggest means to promote our materials to the public. The person we are seeking should have a master's

degree in library science or be a graduate student or have related professional experience; have German language experience and a knowledge or willingness to acquire a knowledge of Maryland German history and similar skills. The work will be performed at the office of our Society. If you know of anyone with this background who may be interested in the job, please contact our office to arrange an interview.

ANNUAL MEETING- FRIDAY, APRIL 1

Mark your calendar to attend our annual meeting, the Friday after Easter, at 6:30 p.m. in the dining hall at Zion Church, City Hall Plaza. A German dinner is provided to members and their guests before the meeting, which is guaranteed to last less than 1 hour.

If you have not yet paid your annual dues, please do so promptly. Dues pay our operating expenses, postage, newsletter, meeting costs, rent, staff expenses. Investment income is for our programs.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT JAMES D. SCHAUB, Ph.D.

Throughout the year the Society's Directors, members and our friends in other German-American organizations suggest things the German Society could do. It is great to hear good ideas, but to put these ideas in place takes involvement of our members. We are at the stage where it is essential to supplement the handful of dedicated members who organize our activities and make things happen. Thus, I am asking you to contribute your time to the Society so that we can maintain our base of activities and tackle some of the new ideas.

Americans are busy people; at each stage of our life we seem to have too many demands on our time. What your Society is asking of you is modest. Help with a particular activity, for example, the annual meeting, the picnic, the student awards program, the annual awards banquet and dinner dance, or a new activity. My promises to you are these: your involvement is welcome. The demands will be modest. You will get to know some very nice people. You will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have continued a tradition of service dating back to 1783.

Some of the new ideas are not entirely new. The German Society wants to re-establish a formal presence at the annual German Festival. We need you there in our booth. We want to respond to members' interest in goods bearing the Society's name or seal. We need you to make this happen. Another idea is a publicity committee to promote awareness of today's German Society and our German American heritage.

How do you volunteer? You can call or write to the Society's office and express your interest. You'll be contacted about the different things you can do. Also, we'll be signing people up for committees at the annual meeting on April 1. Watch the newsletter for upcoming calls for volunteers and respond. Your help is needed.

JAN - FEB, 2005 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 2

KALENDER

April 1 - German Society Annual Meeting

April 22-24 - Towson German Celebration

May 22 - German Society Student Awards

June - German Society Picnic

August - German Festival at Carroll Park

Sept. 15 - Board of Directors meeting

Oct. 2 - Annual Ecumenical Service

November - Annual Awards Banquet

Visit the German Society's website: www.germansociety-md.com

Articles from some past newsletters are posted on our website. Dr. Maureen Helinski updates the site.

For more local German-American happenings, check the web site of the Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von Maryland: www.md-germans.org

Tune in to the Edelweiss Hour every Sunday: Radio 750 AM 9 am

CONGRATULATIONS

to our illustrious member, **Prof. Dr. Volker Schmeissner** upon his election as a director of the United German American Committee.

to our director, **Prof. Dr. Mohamed Esa** upon his election as president of the Maryland Foreign Language Association. Dr. Esa is Associate Professor of German at McDaniel College and past president of the Maryland Association of Teachers of German.

to our director and 2004 Honoree, **Dandridge Brooke**, who celebrated his 80th birthday in January.

to our member and past Honoree, **Governor Robert Ehrlich** for his bravery in plunging into the icy waters of the Chesapeake Bay for the fund raiser for the Maryland Special Olympics, sponsored by the MD State Police on January 29. Earlier in the week icebreakers were operating in the bay to keep the channels clear. More than 2,000 Marylanders jumped in with him.

BE SURE TO PAY YOUR ANNUAL DUES - WE RELY ON DUES TO PAY OUR BILLS

HELP RECRUIT SOME NEW MEMBERS. The best way to accomplish the goals of the Society is to bring new members aboard, to interest them in preserving our German language, culture and heritage.

FEW RESPONSES TO LECTURE AT TOWSON UNIVERSITY PROGRAM

Our Society was asked to provide lecturers to a proposed course to be offered in Towson University's Auburn Society's "Learning in Retirement" program. The course subject was to be **German immigration to the USA, and especially to Maryland**. Unfortunately not enough people responded to permit our Society to participate in the program to meet a March-April deadline. However, we remind our members that there is enough interest in the community for this type of information and we encourage our members to research and write on this topic for future programs. Our Society is also in a position to assemble a collection of papers on this and other topics on local German-American history, including your own recollections of German practices and events. If you get the urge to write along these lines, please share your work with us and we will assist in making it known in the community. Part of the purpose of the Society is the preservation of the memory of our ancestors and their role in making our city, state and country what it is today.

APOLOGIES TO OUR GOVERNOR

In the last issue of our newsletter Governor Ehrlich's name was spelled incorrectly twice. We apologize. The errors generated the following letter to the Editor:

"It is hard to believe that again you have misspelled the name of Gov. Bob EHRlich. It is the third time it has happened in the last year and a half. ...After all. Mr.

Ehrlich has been a member of your organization for a long time and he is our governor. You should think your people would know how to spell his name by now. I'm sure the governor is embarrassed and you should be, too.

A Disgusted Member"

REPLY: We are definitely embarrassed. Our only excuse: our typing fingers and proofreading eyes are weak and deteriorating from old age.

THANKS FOR YOUR LETTERS

Our members have written us with ideas for promoting membership and other matters. We have received more memories of the Deutsches Haus. If you have any matters of interest to our members, send them in. In our next issue we will devote a couple of pages to the input from our membership.

JAN.-FEB., 2005 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 3

OLDENBURG STUDENTS VISITING TOWSON, NEED HOUSING IN JULY

Towson University will sponsor a program for college students from the city of Oldenburg, Germany from July 16-22. Our Society members are asked to volunteer to house the students in our homes during this program. If you volunteer, you will need to provide a bedroom, breakfast and transportation to Towson University in the morning, and pick them up at night. Towson U. has had a relationship with Oldenburg for many years, the program having begun under the direction of our director and former Honoree, Dr. Armin Mruck. Please consider taking in one or more students. If you want more information, call our office and leave your name and phone number on our answering machine and someone from the University will contact you. The students will have some basic English communication background.

Dr. Mruck is exploring the development of a relationship with Baltimore County and Oldenburg. Many American cities have "sister-city" programs with German towns. Baltimore County has had such an arrangement with an Italian city for many years. One of our members, Joseph Batz, is an officer of a 50-years old sister city program between Rockville, MD and Pinneberg, Germany.

NEWSLETTER SEEKS NEW EDITOR

The March-April issue of the Vereinsnachrichten, our Society's newsletter, will be No. 50. It began in 1994. Ted Potthast was then the president and since no one else volunteered to be the editor, he did so and has been doing it ever since. The job of collecting information, writing the articles, setting up the proofs for the printer and getting the paper to the press takes a considerable amount of time. Ted has some other projects which he wants to undertake for the Society. A newsletter committee is being formed, to spread the work among a committee of writers, information collectors, proof-readers, assemblers, etc. Please volunteer to be on the committee. Drop Ted a note to his home at 1819 Leadburn Road, Towson, MD 21204 and he will notify you of the time and place of the committee meeting.

DIRECTOR MARK SCHISLER RESIGNS

Jeff Block, a director of our Society for the past year, was transferred to Michigan and could no longer serve on our board. Best wishes to Mark in his new job.

DIETER MURMAN, DIPLOMAT, DIES

Named as an honorary member of The German Society of Maryland during the years of the presidency of Donald Tillman, Dieter Murman was a dear friend not only of our Society but also the entire Baltimore German community. Dieter was the cultural attaché to the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany. He was a frequent visitor to Baltimore and attended most of our Society's events and the activities of the Bürgerverein. Dieter exemplified the warm relations which existed between the United States and West Germany during the years of communist control of East Germany. After he retired from the diplomatic service, he resided in his hometown west of Cologne. Don and Irma Tillman visited him there. The report of his recent death reached us in January. He is fondly remembered by the older members of the Society.

SOME OF MENCKEN'S WISDOM

Our departed member, Henry L. Mencken, known as the "Bard of Baltimore", wrote in the July 26, 1990 issue of the Baltimore Evening Sun: "As democracy is perfected the office of the president represents, more and more closely, the inner soul of the people. On some great and glorious day the plain folks of the land will reach their heart's desire at last and the White House will be adorned by a downright moron."

PENNER PRESENTS HERITAGE MUSEUM IDEA TO OUR BOARD

Bernard Penner, Esq., a member of our Society and also of the governing council of Zion Church, addressed our Board of Directors in January about a proposal to establish a German Heritage Museum in the "sexton's house" on the church grounds. The council directed Mr. Penner to contact the local German organizations to see if they had an interest in participating in such a project. The anticipated cost of setting up such a museum is \$100,000 which could be funded with a \$50,000 grant from Baltimore City's Heritage Area department, provided an equal amount can be raised from the German American community. Mr. Penner must report back to the Zion council with the results of his exploration and the council will make the decision as to if, how and when to proceed. Our directors believed that such a project is in conformity with our Society's purpose of preserving the German language, culture and history in our state of Maryland and would give consider assisting in raising funds.

JAN.-FEB., 2005 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 4

DIRECTORS CONSIDERING USES FOR GIFT FROM EDWARD BANKA

In his Last Will and Testament, Edward M. Banka gave the Society the largest gift in its history, nearly \$50,000. Our directors have been considering possible uses of the gift which will appropriately honor his memory. Ed was a teenager in the German army serving under General Rommel in North Africa when he was captured by the Americans. As a POW, he was recruited to join the U. S. forces and he made a career in the U.S. Air Force. His hometown and his entire family had been wiped out by bombing during the war. He left his entire estate to our Society. He retired to the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home in Washington where he enjoyed hiking, music, reading and attending local German-American events. Some of the proposals under consideration are using the income from the bequest to further German language studies among young people and fostering German folk and classical music. Ed attended our functions in the Adlersaal, so a proposed gift toward the elevator project with a plaque commemorating his name is under consideration. Another items is the funding of a visit by bus by our Society to Ed's grave in Arlington National Cemetery, every 10 years into perpetuity.

DIRECTORS WORKING ON PLANS FOR 2005 EVENTS; HELP NEEDED

At the January Directors' meeting, the need for volunteers to serve on various committees became apparent if the Society is to have a successful year. In particular, chairmen and workers are needed for the annual picnic, the awards banquet, the ecumenical service and arrangements for the annual meeting. The Society suffered some important personnel losses due to the pressures of family and business, when Bob Gay and Art Nieberding had to retire as directors. We need some people with good organizational skills and a bit of time to devote to our projects. Please call the office to volunteer. Leave your name and number on our answering machine and President Jim Schaub or another officer will contact you promptly to set up a meeting to review the projects.

SINK HOLE FINALLY FIXED

The sink hole which happened in September on Cathedral Street next to our office was finally completed in time for the Christmas light

festival on December 2. The traffic pattern is now back to normal.

RESTAURANT OPENS IN ABERDEEN

Our Society received a notice of a new restaurant in Aberdeen, MD, *Der Deutsches Gasthaus* German Restaurant. The menu features ten German dishes, ranging from \$8.50 to \$15. It is located at 1436 South Philadelphia Blvd., Aberdeen, Md. 21001, Phone 410-272-6222. (If any of our members visits the establishment, send us a note with your review and comments.)

OLD DICTIONARY DOESN'T HELP DEFINE LOCAL FESTIVE EVENTS

Our president suggested we print explanations of some events sponsored by our fellow Bürgerverein members; Fasching, Schützenfest, Schlachtfest, Heuriger, etc. We couldn't find our modern dictionary, but picked up the Funk and Wagnall 1939 version we used in high school in 1948. It was printed in the old German script (which is how we learned to read German), but today is hard on the eyes. The old dictionary was not helpful. Germany abandoned the old script around 1950 and none of the German young people can read it. The old dictionary defined Fasching but not the other terms. Perhaps our readers can write in and give definitions which we can put in our next newsletter.

JAN.-FEB., 2005 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 5

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS:

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

the international wing of the Baltimore Washington international airport is named after William Donald Schaefer.

the Maryland treasury building in Annapolis is named after our honoree and honorary member, the late Louis L. Goldstein.

that up until the 1950's, our annual meeting was usually held at our annual banquet. The banquet was suspended during World War II, but to show support for loyal German Americans, the governor of MD and the mayor of Baltimore attended our annual meeting, held at Zion Church.

that Theodore R. McKeldin, governor of Md and mayor of Baltimore and a great orator, was an active member of our Society. He always attended our banquets and made a speech. Because of his magnificent voice and speaking talents, he was called upon at the Republican convention to nominate Dwight D. Eisenhower (another German American) as president of the U.S.

SCHAEFER CALLED CURMUDGEON

Our beloved member, Don Schaefer was recently praised by Gregory Kane, Baltimore Sun columnist.

Some excerpts from the column: "That delightful curmudgeon, William Donald Schaefer, Baltimore's former mayor, Maryland's former governor, the State's current comptroller and permanent thorn in the side of political correctness is at it again....he dared suggest that immigrants who come to this country and work in fast food restaurants might learn a little English, made some unkind remarks about people suffering from HIV and AIDS.....and spoke against the MBE (minority business enterprises) program by which minority owned businesses are awarded 25% of state procurement contracts....He was absolutely right about the immigrants, half right about HIV-Aids victims and dead on target about the MBE program." These comments were surprising, since the Baltimore Sun seldom agrees with Mr. Schaefer.

MAX SCHMELING DIES AT 99

The only German to hold the world's heavyweight boxing title, Max Schmeling, died Feb. 4 at age 99. He lost his title to the American, Joe Louis.

DR. JOSEPH HOWARD INLOES, CHIROPRACTIC PIONEER

A member of our Society for many years, Dr. Joseph Howard Inloes, the oldest practicing chiropractor in Maryland, died November 17, 2004 in Salisbury at age 86. Born in Baltimore, he was a 1935 graduate of City College. During World War II he enlisted in the Army Air Corps. He later became personal fitness counselor for the Boy Scouts of America.

He was an avid horseman in his youth. Later he became a yachtsman and owned the sloop, *Hornpipe*. In addition to our Society, he was a member of The Society of the Cincinnati, the Society of Colonial Wars, the Sons of the American Revolution, the St. George Society, the St. Andrew Society and the Society of the Eastern Shore.

His great-grandmother, Mary Schwartz, came to America when her future husband sent to Essen for a Lutheran "mail order" bride. She became Mrs. Heurmann, the mother of Mr. Inloe's grandmother, Amelia Heurmann.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, the former Mariruth McGowan, and his twin daughters, Robin McGowan Inloes Handley, of Butler and April McGowan Inloes Smith, of Ruxton, who is also a long-time member of our Society.

BEATRICE KERCHMER, NUN, 97 TAUGHT AT CITY WOMEN'S JAIL

Beatrice Kerchmer grew up on University Parkway, attended St. Agnes School, became a nun in the Mercy order and took the name Sister Mary Aloysius. She taught in numerous schools and returned to her alma mater to teach math, science and Latin. She treated the girls

with kindness and respect, but was a strict German-style schoolmistress and none of the girls dared to come to class unprepared. In 1978 she began teaching in the Baltimore women's jail. She treated the prisoners as she treated the Mr. St. Agnes girls, and they responded and learned. Sister Mary died at Mercy Villa, the nun's retirement home in Baltimore County.

DO LOCAL GERMANS LAG IN SUPPORT FOR BALTIMORE RAVENS?

Not many of our members attend the Ravens' football games. Is it because of the historic German frugality when it comes to paying \$66.27 for a ticket to the game? Or is it just that the don't want to sit out in the cold for three hours? Or rather watch the game on TV.

JAN.-FEB., 2005 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 6

ZION CHURCH CELEBRATES 250TH ANNIVERSARY DURING 2005

Zion church at City Hall Plaza, founded in 1755 by German immigrants, will celebrate its 250 years by a series of events beginning with its Carneval Ball on Feb. 5th. A lecture series on the life and legacy of Dietrich Bonhoeffer will be held March 5, 12 and 19, and on April 9 an ecumenical service commemorating the 60th anniversary of Bonhoeffer's martyrdom at the hands of the Nazis.

Spring-Summer Events

From April 25 to May 18 a multimedia exhibit by the Goethe Institute will be on display in the Adlersaal. It is a world-touring exhibit packed with examples of how the study of the German language can be an enjoyable and sensual experience. A Maifest (May Festival) is set for April 30 in Zion's garden, featuring singing, folk dancing, Kaspertheater (puppet theater), Koffee und Kuchen und Maibowle (May punch). A Springfest will be held on May 5, featuring Bratwurst, a flower and herb festival and flea market. On May 15 there will be a bilingual Pentecost Service, with Bishop H. Gerard Knoche, Delaware Maryland Synod, ELCA. A festive bilingual Homecoming Service and reception is to be held on June 5; a Mission Fest on August 28 with the global mission event of ELCA; and a Gartenfest with Bratwurst and a flea market on September 8.

Fall Events

On October 2, **The German Society of Maryland** will join in sponsoring a Michaelmas Gottesdienst, an ecumenical service for the feast of St. Michael, along with Zion Church, the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland, Christ Church Inner Harbor and St. Mark's Church, followed by a reception. The celebrant will be Bishop Rolf Koppe, Hannover, Germany, head of the Foreign and Ecumenical Affairs Department of the Evangelical Church of Germany.

A Kirchtag, a festive bilingual anniversary service is set for October 15, followed by a luncheon at The Engineers' Club. On October 16, a concert by the Wurttemberg Chamber Orchestra of Heilbronn, Germany will be held to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the death of Adolf Cluss, the most influential architect of our nation's capital in the post-civil war era, who was married at Zion Church. The concert has received a grant from the Transatlantic Program of the Federal Republic of Germany.

On October 26-27 the annual sour beef luncheon-dinner will be accompanied by an authentic Bavarian beer hall in the Adlersaal. A Lutherfest on November 13 features a presentation by Dr. Eric Gritsch (a member of our Society) on "Luther's View of

History and Time". It will be followed by a hearty supper of Bratwurst, beer, cider, bread and potatoes and a German dessert. The 8th annual Christkindmarkt takes place November 26-27,

Concert by world famous violinist

On December 22, there will be a chamber music concert with Hilary Hahn, a world famous violinist who made her first public appearance on the stage at Zion's Adlersaal. just before her 4th birthday. Now, at age 25, she is a Grammy Award winner. Her current year's recital tours include Boston, London, Vienna, Hamburg, Tokyo and Shanghai, plus appearances with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, Milwaukee Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Mournemouth Symphony, Singapore Symphony and NHK Symphony.

Her appearance at Zion is for the benefit of the church organ restoration fund. Tickets are \$125, \$100, \$75 and \$50. A reception following the concert is sponsored by the Embassy of the Federal Republic.

German Society's close relationship

Our Society has had a special relationship with Zion Church. Our own founders included many members of the church. The church has a dedicated commitment to fostering German culture and heritage. It hosts many of our events, including our annual meeting.

For information on other of the 250th anniversary celebration, call the church at 410-727-3939 or check its website: www.zionbaltimore.org

DO WE DESERVE A MONTH?

February is "Black History Month" in the public schools, during which the children of German Americans, Irish, Polish etc are forced to study about the history of African Americans. We can't get inside the classrooms to hear what is being taught, but some channel-surfing last week turned up a classroom full of children interviewed by Linda Ellerbe, a TV personality. The class was taught by a bearded black man who explained to the children why all American blacks are entitled to be paid compensation because their ancestors were slaves. The logic is that today's blacks are still victims of a "slave mentality."

Many Germans came to America as "indentured servants". They were treated worse than slaves. A slave was an investment, but the masters only had to keep the servant alive until his term expired.

Governor Parris Glendonning proclaimed March "Irish American Month." President Bush will declare October 6 as German-American Day. The German Society is considering petitioning Governor Ehrlich to declare October as "German-American Month".

JAN - FEB, 2005 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 7

POPE BEATIFIES GERMAN NUN, AUSTRIAN EMPEROR, KARL I

On October 3, Pope John Paul declared a German nun, Anne Catherine Emmerich, and an Austrian emperor, Karl I, to be "blessed", a step in the process of naming them saints. Anne was believed to be a mystic, whose visions of Christ's passion were transcribed by the German poet, Clemens Brentano. They influenced Mel Gibson in preparing his recent film, *The Passion of Christ*. Queen Fabiola of Belgium and 700 descendants of the Hapsburg dynasty attended the ceremonies in Rome for Emperor Karl I.

Both of the beatifications were the subject of controversy: Anne Emmerich was opposed by the Jewish Anti-Defamation League because of their opposition to the *Passion* film; and Karl I, because troops under his command in World War I used poison gas on the battlefield. Karl died penniless and in exile in Belgium in 1922 after the collapse of his empire.

SWISS VOTE DOWN CITIZENSHIP VIA BIRTH IN SWITZERLAND

The USA grants citizenship to anyone born here. Not all countries do so. Germany recently changed its law to do so. The Swiss, in a recent election, voted against it. Swiss law makes citizenship hard to get. Immigrants must wait 12 years to apply for citizenship, a process which once included visits by inspectors to assure that applicants' apartments conformed to the Swiss standard of cleanliness. Opponents to the referendum to ease citizenship requirements published Swiss identity cards with the photo of Osama bin Laden, claiming Switzerland could be taken over by Muslims. Germany now has a 10% Muslim population. With high birth rates among the Muslims and very low birthrates among the native Germans, Germany could become a Muslim-controlled nation.

DR. HILTGUNT ZASSENHAUS, 88

Dr. Hiltgunt M. Zassenhaus, born in Hamburg, Germany and a long-time resident of the Baltimore area, died Nov. 09. She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Hamburg in 1938 and thereafter worked in Hitler's justice department where she used her position to aid the victims of the Nazi regime.

After the war she studied medicine and earned her doctorate at the University of Copenhagen in 1952. The same year she came to Baltimore and interned and did her residency at City Hospital. Thereafter she began her private medical practice. She became world-famous because of her research and treatment of "blue babies".

Dr. Zassenhaus received honorary doctoral degrees from Western Maryland College, Goucher College, The College of Notre Dame of Maryland, Towson University and the University of Maryland.

Her award-winning book *Walls*, about her experiences in Germany, was translated into many languages and is still in print. It was named one of the top 25 books for young adults in 1974. Another of her books was made into a television documentary. She was a nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1974 and received high honors in Europe. William Donald Schafer presented her the Mayor's citation and Gov. Harry Hughes named her to the Maryland Hall of Fame. She was a friend of our director, Rev. H. S. Siegfried Otto. A memorial service will be held for her in December at Zion Church, City Hall Plaza.

FRED. PRAUSNITZ, CONDUCTOR

Frederick Prausnitz, conductor, who taught for many years at Baltimore's Peabody Institute died Nov. 12 at age 84. He was born in Cologne, Germany. He was considered one of the most important teachers of conducting in America. His book *Score and Podium: A Complete Guide to Conducting* is used as a text in courses on conducting.