

VEREINSNACHRICHTEN

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Dr. Mohamed Esa, Hilary Hahn, Kai Schachtebeck, Dr. Susanne Veith & Dr. James Schaub

HILARY HAHN RECEIVES GERMAN SOCIETY AWARD AT BANQUET

At its annual banquet the Society honors a Marylander having a German heritage who has made a significant contribution to our state or nation. This year's honoree was Hilary Hahn, a world-renowned violinist and Grammy Award winner. The presentation was made on Nov. 15 in the Adlersaal of the Zion Church of Baltimore. At 28 Hahn is the youngest person to be selected by the Society for this award.

Hilary made her first public appearance playing the violin at age 4, in the same Adlersaal where the banquet took place. Playing a violin handcrafted in 1864, she made her debut with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra at age 12. In 2001 she was named "America's Best Young Classical Musician" by Time Magazine. In 2002 she won a Grammy as "Best

Soloist with Orchestra" for her recording of the Brahms and Stravinsky concertos with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields and Sir Neville Mariner. Recently, in October, 2008, she was named the 2008 "Artist of the Year" by Gramophone magazine.

Immediately prior to her appearance at our banquet in Baltimore, she returned from performances in South Korea and China with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and from earlier recording sessions with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

Orchestra in England and Germany. After leaving Baltimore she was scheduled to appear with the San Francisco Symphony and then to recording sessions in Munich and recitals in Japan.

(Continued on page 2)

"The purpose of the German Society of Maryland is to preserve and promote the German heritage, language and traditions through educational, social and benevolent programs; and to develop the unity and continuity of the German American community in the State of Maryland."

HILARY HAHN (CONT'D FROM P. 1)

Hilary Hahn came to Baltimore with her parents at age 3 and began playing the violin a year later in the Preparatory Department of Baltimore's famous Peabody Conservatory of Music. At age 10 she became the youngest student at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music. At age 19 she graduated from Curtis with a Bachelor of Music degree.

In the past decade she has released more than a dozen best-selling albums for Sony Classical and for Deutsche Grammophon, in repertoire ranging from Bach to Bernstein, Mozart to Mendelssohn, Sibelius to Shostakovich and - most recently - the legendary violin concerto of Arnold Schoenberg which opened at No. 1 on the Billboard classical charts and stayed in that position for weeks after it appeared.

Hilary has a variety of unusual projects. She was the featured soloist in the Oscar-nominated movie "The Village." She also toured with the American folk singer Josh Ritter and last year was the soloist for the worldwide telecast of the 80th birthday concert of Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican.

Despite her international successes, Hilary has not forgotten Baltimore or her roots at Zion Church where her parents are still members. In 2005 she and friends from the Baltimore Symphony performed chamber music at the church to raise money for a new organ and to celebrate the church's 250th anniversary.

In early June, 2009, Hilary will return to Maryland for concerts with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Maestra Marin Alsop, performing a concerto newly composed for her by Jennifer Higdon.

Hilary is an avid writer and corresponds with her fans via You Tube video on the internet. She keeps a journal on her website at: <http://www.hilaryhahn.com>

Prior recipients of the German Society's annual award include former Maryland Governors (and Society members) William Donald Schafer and Robert Ehrlich, Rev. Joseph Sellinger, President of Loyola College of Baltimore and Dr. Robert Heysyll, the president of the Johns Hopkins Hospital and Medical School, Wolfgang Oehme, world renown landscape architect and author and Dr. David Denisch, prominent dental surgeon, historian, world traveler and raconteur.

(Thanks to Dr. Mohamed Esa, chairman of the banquet committee, for the material in this article.) President Schaub also thanks the members of the banquet committee: Dr. Mary Upman, Merl Arp, Brigitte Fessenden, Dr. Maureen Helinski, Andrea Shalal-Esa, Barbel Otto and Theodore Potthast.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year! Glueckliches neues Jahr!

I am pleased to report that our Society stayed true to its purpose in 2008. See the statement of our purpose that appears in this and every German Society news-letter. In the area of education our society provided grants to four college students studying German at Maryland institutions and funded cash prizes for achievement to nearly 100 Maryland high school students of German. Despite the weakness in the economy, we will continue to support the study of German in 2009, and we will keep up our other activities including the free meal at our annual general membership meeting in April, the picnic, the awards program, and more.

One of the goals for the German Society in 2009 is to increase our membership. You should have by now received your bill for membership dues. Due to the low rate of return on investments, our dues are a major source of funding our activities. Please also consider a tax-deductible donation to assist our projects in these hard times.

Our membership committee will soon be mailing you application forms to assist you in recruiting new members. I read the membership application carefully before I joined the German Society. Two points convinced me to join. First, the purpose was clear and was something I wanted to support. Second, was this statement under membership qualifications, "We are an American organization and our loyalty is to the United States of America." Preserving and promoting our German heritage and traditions is an individual freedom we enjoy and doing so as a Society is certainly not anti-American. So, draw upon the information in our membership application and your personal experiences with the German Society to bring in a new member.

James Schaub, President

WHAT ELSE HAPPENED IN 1783?

The German Society of Maryland was founded in 1783. Another important event of that year was the ending of the Revolutionary War, with the signing of a peace treaty with England.

KALENDER

Feb. 21 Fasching at Adlersaal
April 17 Annual Membership Meeting

YOU'RE INVITED: SAT. FEB. 21 FASCHING-KARNIVAL-FASTNACHT

German-speaking countries use all three names for the same celebration: a pre-lenten party atmosphere. In New Orleans it's called Carnival and takes place on "Fat Tuesday", the day before Ash Wednesday.

Our Society, as part of the Buergerverein von Maryland, is sponsoring this event in Baltimore amid a German cultural atmosphere at the Zion Church Adlersaal. The date is Saturday, February 21, 2009 from 7 to 11 p.m. Come with or without costumes, but there will be costume prizes for assorted categories. Tickets are \$20 per person. Music by Heidi and the Heimat Echo Band. Included are assorted snacks, German beer, sodas and set-ups.

Plan to come and bring guests. Send your check payable to "Buergerverein" to Loy Vogel 12732 Cumminghill Cove Rd., Baltimore, MD 21220. Deadline for tickets is February 14.

Enjoy a happy German cultural event with your family and friends! Take a break and snap out of the winter doldrums. Do as they do in Germany and Switzerland and have some fun before the seriousness of the Lenten season settles in. Take advantage of your membership in our Society.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Society's investment portfolio has weathered the storm of the volatile market because the committee liquidated our stock holdings before the recent crash. 85% of our assets are in cash funds. The committee takes a conservative stance and is waiting for the market to stabilize before reentering.

Our assets are held in T. Rowe Price and in our checking account. While the Standard & Poor 500 Index declined 38.47% in 2008 and the Dow Jones Industrial average declined 33.82%, the decline in our own investments was only 6%.

At a meeting of the Finance Committee on Jan. 22, the committee decided to explore investments which would provide a greater yield than the money market funds and it is looking at bond funds and certificates of deposit. The volatility and uncertainty of the financial markets make decisions difficult.

GERMAN SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

Our Board of Directors meet 4 times each year. The Executive Committee meets at least 8 times. Committees meet as business requires. The usual activities in which our members participate are several:

1. the annual meeting (Friday after Easter)
2. high school achievement awards (mid-May)
3. annual picnic (lately in June, but moveable)
4. German Festival, lately at Timonium Fairgrounds
5. ecumenical service (end of September)
6. annual awards banquet (usually first Sat. of Nov.)

In addition, our Society is invited to attend activities sponsored by other organizations: annual banquet of The Society for the History of the Germans in MD; the Christkindlmarkt sponsored by Zion Church and the Buergerverein; Oktoberfests sponsored by Schifferstadt, by Germania Lodge (Masons) and others; musical events put on by the Arion Sangverein; bus trips sponsored by the Edelweis Club and by Club Fidelitas, and sometimes trips to Germany, Austria and Switzerland sponsored by other organizations; we are welcome at the soccer games of the Baltimore Kickers; and if you can travel to the Washington suburbs, we are invited to events sponsored by the members of the Associated German American Societies of Greater Washington, of which the German Society is a member. Zion Church has been named as a center of German culture, and many events are held there: May day celebrations, sour beef lunches and dinners, musical events and plays. Our society tries to keep our members informed of such events through our newsletter. We urge our members to take advantage of such German American activities, to learn and celebrate our heritage.

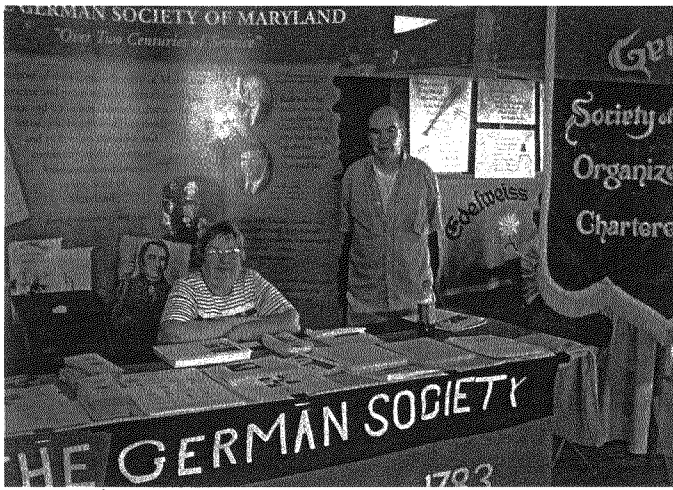
SCHIFFERSTADT ON TRACK

The plans for our society's display at the 2008 Oktoberfest at Schifferstadt went awry because of a communication failure. The snafu has been resolved. The organization in charge of the festival, Frederick County Landmarks, has agreed that The German Society of Maryland may have a presentation booth at the event in 2009, and the usual fee will be waived. The event occurs in mid-October, and we will be looking for volunteers to staff our presentation. The Schifferstadt Oktoberfest is sponsored by the City of Frederick, MD and is one of the best such events in the region. The museum at Schifferstadt, along with Dr. David Denisch whose ancestor founded it, were the honorees at our Society's 2006 Awards Banquet.

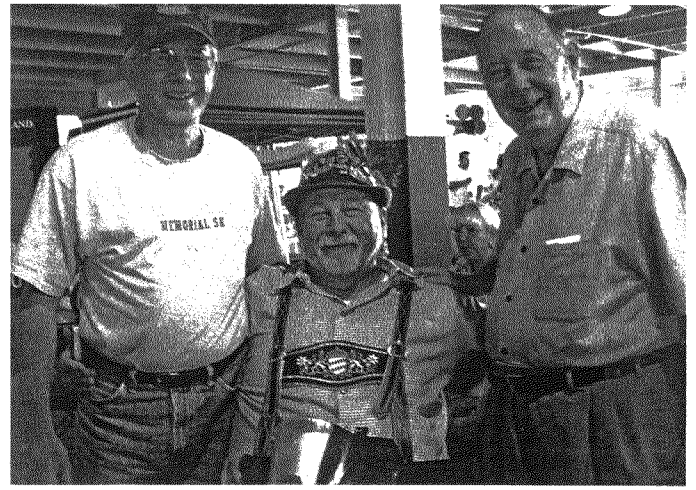


SOME PHOTOS FROM EVENTS OF 2008

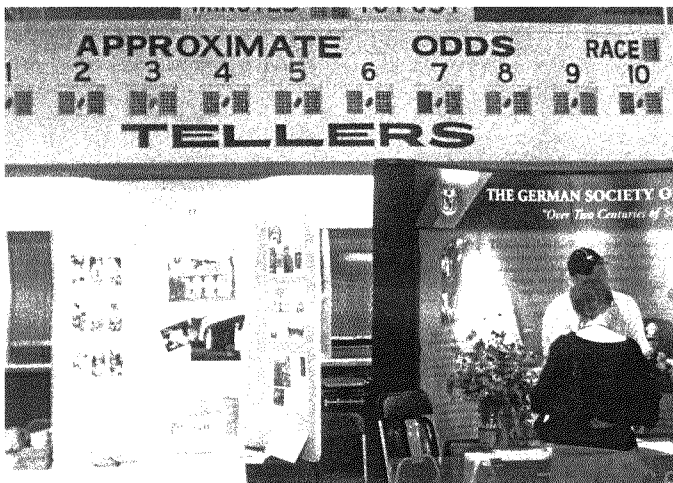
Top: Hilary Hahn and Dr. Mohamed Esa (center) with guests at Annual Awards Banquet
Middle: Brigitte and Dr. Nicholas Fessenden at Jamestown 400th anniversary event.
Bottom: German Society members at our annual picnic - Seminary Park, Lutherville



Our booth at the German Festival



Members enjoying the festival



1 Our booth: want to place a bet?



Schfferstadt ladies in garb of the 1700's

PHOTOS SHOW OUR SOCIETY MEMBERS IN ACTION

The Maryland German Festival, the longest-running ethnic event in the United States (107 years) was held at the end of June at the State Fair Grounds in Timonium. Our Society has participated in it since its inception. It is sponsored by the Deutschamerikanischer Buergerverein von Maryland of which our Society was a founding member. We support the festival by operating a stand which is staffed by volunteers from our membership. We distribute materials about our Society and about German American institutions and events. The festival is mainly under the stands which are the grandstands for horse races held during the Maryland State Fair. In 2008 our stand was located where pari-mutual betting takes place during the races.

While the Society maintains a program of perennial events (our annual meeting, our picnic, high school student awards for excellence in German studies, awards to college students studying German, the German Festival, the ecumenical service) we also participate in events sponsored by other German organizations, especially events like the Fasching and the Christkindlmarkt of the Buergerverein. In 2009 we will also be involved in events at Schifferstadt in Frederick, MD. Our directors are considering several proposals for new activities, which can go forward only if our members volunteer to devote serious time and effort to them. There is much to be done to foster and preserve the heritage we have received from the German speaking countries of Europe.

ECUMENICAL SERVICE CELEBRATES 60TH ANNIVERSARY BERLIN AIRLIFT

In 1948 the Russians blockaded Berlin, but the USA sent food and supplies to the 2,000,00 Berliners, thus saving them from starvation. The homilist at the ecumenical service, an Air Force Chaplain, told of his experiences while stationed in Germany, relating the gratitude which the German people felt towards Americans, then and now.

Three Catholic and three Protestant clergymen participated in the event. The Zion choir, accompanied by a brass ensemble, added to the solemnity of the service. Our Society was a financial sponsor of the event. The vesper service was conducted in both English and German, and the following prayer was offered for our Society:

“Wir beten für die Deutsche Gesellschaft von Maryland und alle deutsch-amerikanischen Vereine. Segne du ihre Arbeit der Verständigung zwischen den Völkern und Traditionen. Hilf uns, das Gute unserer Tradition zu bewahren und es einzubringen in die Suche nach Werten, auf dem Weg zu einer Welt, in der Gerechtigkeit und Frieden herrschen.” (We pray for The German Society of Maryland and all German American clubs and societies. Bless their work of understanding between nations and traditions. Help us keep the good in our tradition and bring it to bear in the quest for values on our journey towards a world in which justice and peace prevail.)

CONGRATULATIONS to Carol Karcher Purcell, a member of the U.S. Tennis Association’s Senior Women’s team which won the National Championship matches which were held in Las Vegas. Carol is the Director of the Baltimore Flower Mart which is held in Mt. Vernon Square where our office is located. The event raises many thousands of dollars for local charities.

MENCKEN ON DEMOCRACY - EIGHTY YEARS AGO

"Democracy has become, in late years, a sort of burlesque of itself. The Fathers who invented it, if they could return from hell, would never recognize it. It was conceived as a government of free men; it has become simply a battle of charlatans for the votes of idiots."- H. L. Mencken, *The Evening Sun*, April 26, 1937
 Thanks to The Mencken Society’s report of July, 2008. (What a great reading it would be if Mencken were alive to cover current political maneuvering!)

BLOB’S PARK REOPENS

Blob’s Park, a meeting place for German Americans for over 75 years and which closed last year, has been reopened by Max Eggerl, great-nephew of the founder, Bavarian immigrant, Max Blob. Located off the Baltimore Washington Parkway half-way between the two cities, it has a deep-seated German heritage, fostering German music and food. For a schedule of events, call 410-799-7130 or visit its website at info@blobspark.net

A Valentine’s Day outing will occur on Saturday, February 14, featuring 2 bands: The Rhinelanders, a popular polka band, and The Shades of Blue, a 22-piece big-band orchestra. A full menu dinner is available from 6-10 pm. Call for reservations.

The late Katherine Eggerl, Max Blob’s niece who ran the park for more than 50 years, was a member of our society who was honored at our annual banquet shortly before her death. Our Society is looking into the possibility of holding our annual picnic at Blob’s this year. We held our picnic there several times before.

GERMAN AMERICAN PHILANTHROPY BUYS BUILDING IN D.C.

German Americans donated several million dollars to acquire Hockemeyer Hall in Washington, D.C. for the headquarters of The German American Heritage Foundation of the USA. The organization’s current newsletter published the names of various donors. One gave more than \$250,000, another more than \$150,000, 3 more than \$100,000 and 8 gave between \$50 and \$100,000. Others gave more than the following amounts: \$25k - 16; \$15k - 2; \$10k - 2; \$5k - 13; \$2,500 - 16; \$1,000 - 73; \$500 - 82 and 322 gave \$100 or more. This was truly an outpouring of generosity from the German American community. Most of the large donations came from PA, CA, NY and NJ. Two were from MD. The building is intended as a national headquarters in the U.S. capital to establish the presence of the German Americans. The German Society of MD has long ties to Heritage Foundation. Our Society has donated #100.

RICHARD F. FISCHER, r.i.p.

We have recently learned of the death of one of our members: **Richard F. Fischer** of Havana Florida, survived by his wife, Alice C. Fischer. Richard occasionally sent information for our newsletter. Although Richard lived in Florida for many years, he remained loyal to and supported our Society.

"POLITICAL CORRECTNESS" NOT IN VOGUE AT 1895 ANNUAL BANQUET OUR FOREBEARS POKED FUN AT CATHOLICS AND MUSLIMS IN SONGS

Our archives have yielded a copy of the song sheet used at the Society's annual banquet 113 years ago, in 1895. In those days, singing was an important element in every gathering of Germans. Our membership contained less than a handful of women, and the likelihood was that only men attended the banquet. The flavor of some of the songs strongly point to the banquet as a stag affair.

The song re-printed below was translated by Robert Hirsch, assisted by Helga Burd and Petra Nedermann. The Society's members who attended the 1895 banquet did not include Catholics or Muslims (or at least none who were hypersensitive). The song pokes fun at the Pope, as well as at the ruler of the Ottoman Empire, the Sultan. (The Ottoman Turks, at various periods of history, controlled much of south-central Europe, as far north as Vienna. The Sultan was not deposed until 1921.) We print the song and its translation so that today's Society membership may know that things were not always as they are today.

The German text has been copied exactly from the original song sheet. The German script was used universally until after World War II when Germany adopted the same print type as the English speaking world. Our older American born members who studied German in school can read the German script easily. Young people in Germany today generally cannot read and comprehend it.

GERMAN TEXT OF THE SONG AS PRINTED IN THE 1895 PROGRAM

Der Papst lebt herrlich in der Welt,
Es fehlt ihm nie an Ab'shjeid;
Er trinkt vom allerbesten Wein:
Ich möchte doch der Papst wohl sein!

Doch nein! er ist ein armer Nicht:
Ein helbes Mädchen küßt ihn nicht,
Er schläft in seinem Bett allein:
Ich möchte doch der Papst nicht sein!

Der Sultan lebt in Saus und Braus
Er wohnt in einem großen Haus
Voll wunderschöner Mägdelein:
Ich möchte doch der Sultan sein!

Doch nein! er ist ein armer Mann,
Denn, folgt er seinem Alforan,
So trinkt er keinen Tropfen Wein:
Ich möchte doch nicht Sultan sein!

Getheilt veracht' ich Beider Glück,
Und fehr' in meinen Stand zurück;
Doch das geh' ich mit Freuden ein:
Halb Papst, halb Sultan will ich sein!

D'rum, Mädels, gib mir einen Kuß,
Denn ich bin dein Herr Sultanus!
Ihr trauten Brüder, schenket ein,
Ich will zugleich der Papst auch sein!

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Pope lives magnificently in the world.
He's never short of "indulgence money".
He drinks the finest wine.
I certainly would like to be the Pope!

But, no! He's a poor little fellow.
No beautiful girl will kiss him.
He sleeps alone in his bed.
I certainly would not like to be the Pope!

The Sultan has a riotous life.
He lives in a big house.
Full of wondrously beautiful servant girls.
I certainly would like to be the Sultan.

But, no! He is a poor man
Because he follows his Koran
He does not drink a drop of wine.
I certainly would not like to be the Sultan!

I despise both situations
And come back to my own position in life.
But then I happily reach a decision:
I want to be half Pope and half Sultan.

So, girl, give me a kiss
Because I am your Lord Sultan!
You, my faithful companions, keep the glasses full
So at the same time, I'll also be the Pope.