



Vereinsnachrichten

Founded in 1783 and Incorporated by Act of the General Assembly of Maryland

Chapter 100, February 3, 1818

Inside this issue:

| | |
|--|----|
| <i>President's Message</i> | 1 |
| <i>Meet our Officers</i> | 2 |
| <i>German Society Picnic</i> | 4 |
| <i>Getting to Know You</i> | 5 |
| <i>On the Firing Line with the Germans</i> | 6 |
| <i>Save the Eagle</i> | 7 |
| <i>Documentary-Schuler Family Legacy</i> | 8 |
| <i>Meet Theodore Potthast</i> | 9 |
| <i>In Sympathy</i> | 10 |
| <i>AATG Awards/ GSM Annual Meeting</i> | 11 |

The purpose of the German Society of Maryland is to preserve and promote the German heritage 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

President's Message-Kurt D. Wittstadt



Liebe Mitglieder - Dear Members,

It's an honor to write my first letter to our membership as the president of The German Society of Maryland. Since being involved as a child, the society and its many activities have always been close to my heart. I recall many of the changes over the decades, and have great pride in the direction we're heading. This is apparent in the growth that we have experienced and partnerships that we have built in the community. I would like to thank Anton G. Smoot for his service as president the past three years and setting a direction that will allow our society to continue to garner more attention through social media and outreach.

Also thanks to our Board of Directors for their continued support and exemplary example to other organizations in the region.

Thank you to our members for supporting our society's mission in the Maryland and Mid-Atlantic region. You are all ambassadors of The German Society of Maryland and our most important asset to our continued success.

As part of our outreach, we have successfully partnered with local schools, businesses and community organizations. All of this would not be able to happen without our members. As you have seen in our recent newsletters, we have been highlighting members so we can get to know one another. It is important to hear from and meet each one of you. As part of this, we have brought back our family picnic so that we may meet each other and share in Gemütlichkeit.

Speaking of picnic, I would like to thank everyone who attended our family picnic. This year we held the picnic at North Point State Park at the historic Trolley Station Pavilion. It was a great success with children fishing, playing in the sand by the bay and myself grilling bratwurst. Thank you to Ranger Bob Iman. He opened and staffed the visitor center especially for our members to visit the bust of General John Stricker, the hero of the Battle of North Point and a Vice President of our society. Those who attended experienced how the society successfully partners with local businesses. I would like to thank the following local companies for contributing to the success

of the society's picnic: Hank Ward of Das Pretzel Haus who helped set up and donated the pretzels and pretzel rolls, Braumeister Martin Virga of Gunpowder Falls Brewing who served his own Reinheitsgebot Bier, Binkert's Meats, and Patrick Richter of Waste Neutral for personally maintaining our refuse in an environmentally conscious manner and donating the materials. Please support these local German businesses as they have supported us.

I encourage each of you to visit our website at www.germansociety-md.com and like us on Facebook. This will keep you up to date on events and see what we are doing in the community. As always, please share any input or ideas and I encourage your participation.

All the best and look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Unser Kalender

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| July 22-23 | 117 th Annual German Festival/Maryland State Fairgrounds |
| August 25 | Beer & Brats—Zion Garden |
| September 23-23 | Maryland Oktoberfest-Maryland State Fairgrounds |
| October 6 | German American Day at Friendship Gardens—DC |
| October 12 | SHGM Annual Lecture |
| October 17 | ‘German Day’ at McDaniel College |
| October 21-22 | Oktoberfest at Schifferstadt |

Publication Dates:

January-March: Deadline 12/15
 April-June: Deadline 3/15
 July-September: Deadline 6/15
 October-December: Deadline 9/15

Links:

German Society Website:
www.germansociety-md.com
Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein:
www.md-germans.org
German Marylanders:
www.germanmarylanders.org
German American Radio:
germanamericanradio.com



Proud Member of the German American Heritage Foundation

Meet your New 2017 Officers

President:
Kurt D. Wittstadt



Having grown up in The German Society of Maryland, I remember attending the annual Awards Banquet and family picnics with my grandparents, parents and siblings and now with my own family! Being a member was natural and the right thing to do, not out of tradition, but to recognize and honor the contributions of the German immigrants who built and shaped Maryland and the United States.

I am first and foremost a musician. Being a French hornist has always been central to who I am and continue to play pro-

fessionally and teach. Currently I work for Buffet Crampon, a distributor of French and German professional wind instruments, manufacturers of the highest quality. Prior to this, I taught music in public schools and higher education. I'm also active in the 4-H and as an Eagle Scout providing support to my sons pack as the Assistant Cubmaster. As a husband and father of two, I am dedicated to my family which I count as a true blessing and enjoy spending as much time as possible with my wife, Elizabeth, and children, Kurt II and Anneliese.

It's been an honor serving as Vice President of the society and look forward to serving as President.

Meet our 1st Vice-President:
Dr. James Schaub, Ph.D



Jim' is not a new Officer, having served twice as president (2002-2005, and 2008-2010) and is a Lifetime Director.

Jim took his wife Abbie and two young daughters to the German Festival at Carroll Park in 1995 and 1996 to experience some German-American culture. After chatting with the folks at the German Society booth, Jim joined the German Society in 1996. Abbie, whose 4 grandparents were all born in Ireland, has preserved awareness of Irish culture and history.

Jim was elected to the Board of Directors in 2000.

Jim was raised in Catonsville with two brothers and a sister. The boys went to high school at Mount St. Joseph, where they all took German and Latin. Jim also

took intermediate German at Loyola College where he received a BA in Economics. He received his Ph.D. in Economics at North Carolina State University.

Jim was employed by the US Department of Agriculture in Washington from 1979 to 2012 working on issues ranging from rural labor market performance to international trade in peanuts, to food safety. During his career at Agriculture, Jim served on a United Nations Committee reporting on chemical use and damage to the atmosphere. Since retiring from the Department of Agriculture, he has worked as a consulting economist/researcher for crop producers in Argentina, Mexico, California, and Florida as well as teaching economics at Loyola University.

Jim now spends much of his time on genealogical research. His 2nd great grandfather, Henry Schaub, was born in Hesse Darmstadt

in 1815 and came to America in the mid 1830's. Jim is President of the Charles Carroll of Carrollton Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution and 3rd Vice President of the Society of the War of 1812 in Maryland.

Meet our 2nd Vice-President: Steven Harper



Steven was born in Canton, Ohio. His German connection is

through his paternal grandmother, whose maiden name was Julia Lippert. The Lipperts arrived in Baltimore from Bürgstadt am Main in 1833, but soon departed for points west, first Pittsburgh and then onto Canton, Ohio. Steven began learning German in high school, and then majored in German at the Catholic University of America. He completed a master's degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in 1980, and subsequently worked as a foreign affairs analyst at the

Library of Congress. He left that position to study for the Roman Catholic priesthood as a member of the Order of Preachers (the Dominicans). After several years, however, he decided that his calling was not to the religious life, and he returned to the Washington, DC, area, eventually taking a position at the Department of Commerce. In 1997 he married Barbara Klein and moved to Baltimore, joining the German Society not long after. Their daughter Catherine was born in July 2004, and Steven has been a stay-at-home dad since that time. He is currently homeschooling her. Both he and his wife have been active as teachers at the German School at Zion Lutheran Church in Baltimore.

Meet our Treasurer: Theodore J. Potthast, Jr.



Ted has been the Society's Treasurer for 9 years. He is a retired attorney.

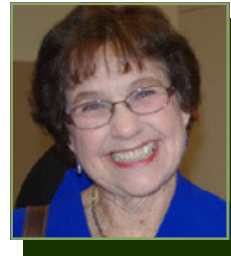
Ted's ancestors are from Westphalia, specifically a little town called Borgholz. They arrived in the United States in 1892.

Ted joined the Society in 1966. His father before him was a member from 1924 to 1998.

He is married to Constance Fava. They are celebrating 59 years together. Their children, Catherine, John, Mark, and Mia are all members of the society. His grandchildren, Andrew, Katherine, Benjamin, Sara and Erna are all lifetime members of the Society.

Ted's hobbies are reading and writing. (Ted is our 'Spotlight' Director this issue... See page 9)

Meet our Secretary: Dr. Maureen M. Helinski



Maureen is an Adjunct instructor of German at Anne Arundel County Community College (AACC).

Like others in our society, Maureen's German connections are familiar. Three of her grandparents were German immigrants. This

relationship led to Maureen studying in Germany and also receiving her Ph.D. in German from Johns Hopkins. She taught High School German for 20 years before retiring and teaching at the Community College level.

She has been a member of the German Society since 1990. As a High School teacher, Maureen regularly took students to Germany with The German American Partnership Program. Needing financial support, it was suggested by Professor Mohamed Esa that she contact the Society. The GSM provided financial support, but also snagged one of our long-time directors and a true asset to our board. She has chaired the Education committee for many years.

Maureen is married with 4 adult children and 10 grandchildren. All of her children have studied and/or worked abroad.

Besides German, Maureen enjoys travelling, reading, teaching and learning.

SHGM to hold Annual Lecture

On October 12, the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland will hold its annual dinner /lecture at Zion Church from 6 to 9 PM. Our speaker will be genealogist Deborah Hoffman, who will speak on "The philanthropic roles of the German Society and Zion Church for Baltimore's immigrants." German Society members may well be interested in this important part of their history. Tickets for \$45 will be available after July 17. Contact Nick Fessenden at [443.542.2263](tel:443.542.2263) or nicholasfessenden@comcast.net.

Welcome New Member

Michael Tamitz





**At the Maryland State Fairgrounds
Timonium, MD.
In the 'air conditioned' Exhibition Hall!

FREE PARKING**

**Featuring the
'Alex Meixner Band'!**

**Saturday, July 22
11:30 am to 10 pm**

**Sunday, July 23
11:30 am to 6 pm**

**Adults: \$10.00, Seniors—\$7.00
Active Military with ID: \$7.00
Children under 12 FREE w/ paying adult**

FREE When you come in full tracht!

Credit Card Surcharge Applied

More info: <http://www.md-germans.org/>

GSM Family Picnic at North Point State Park

By Kurt Wittstadt



What is one of the best ways to spend a beautiful day in May? On the bay at the The German

Society of Maryland's Family Picnic! It was great to bring the annual picnic back to our members as this was always a great time for families to come together for food, fun and Gemütlichkeit. This year's picnic was held at North Point State Park at the historic Trolley Station Pavilion. The location

was ideal, with panoramic views of the bay and a swimming beach, fishing and craft table

for all of the children to have fun. Additionally, it provided an opportunity for our members to see our society's commissioned bust of General John Stricker, the hero of the Battle of North Point and former Vice President of our society, on display at the visitor center.



As all attendees will agree, it was a great success and a fabulous time. Ranger Bob Iman opened the visitor center for our



Continued on page -7-

Who led the German Society- 200 Years Ago-1817?

Christian Mayer-Son of Charles Frederick Mayer, an eminent Maryland Lawyer, whose family emigrated from Ulm in Württemberg in 1784. Christian Mayer was a man of prominence in the growing commercial town and held such offices as President of the German Society of Maryland, president of a Baltimore insurance company and consul-general of Württemberg. He entered the mercantile business of Valk, Burger & Schonten of Baltimore and upon a change in ownership, he was admitted as a partner in Valk & Co. In 1802 he entered a partnership with Lewis Brantz and they transacted the tobacco trade in Maryland. He also assumed the duties of president of the Patapsco Marine Insurance Company and later the Neptune Marine Insurance Company. He was the father of Brantz Mayer another prominent Baltimore citizen that was one of the founders of the Maryland Historical Society.

Getting to Know You!

‘Getting to know you, getting to know all about you’...what a great song with a great purpose. The German Society would like to ‘get to know you’ our members. Our new page will spotlight our members.

Just provide us with:

Name, Where you live, What you do, Your ‘German’ connection, How long have you been a member of the GSM?, what are your Hobbies

Then send it with your photo to bsnarnold7@gmail.com.

Also, if you have news you wish to share or news about a member that may have moved from the area, send it to me. Let’s get to know each other!

This month, ‘Getting to Know You’ will spotlight our three newest directors.

Zachary Butt



Zachary ‘Zach’ was born and lives in Baltimore, Md. He is self-employed. His German connection is his rich family history of Bavarian ancestors. He also took five years

of German at Loyola

Blakefield. He became a member of the German Society of Maryland in 1999 and is the son of Lifetime director, Linda Butt.

Zach enjoys researching his German and Southern Heritage and collecting related memorabilia, visiting historical sites on the East Coast, and spending time with family.

Lynette Brooke-Dean



Lynette was born in the fifties to a first generation mother of two German parents and a fa-

ther whose father was German and mother was English.

As a child, Lynette spent many hours with her mother’s parents. Oma and Opa would visit the Bier Garden at the Deutsches Haus and she is quick to recall the fun.

Her Uncle, Kurt Kuenzel started the German Radio Club and had an import-export business. When the Oktoberfest was started up at the 5th Regiment Armory, the family pitched in volunteering when and where they could.

Until recently, she worked full-time in the insurance industry. Now a good deal of she and her husband Kraig’s time is spent volunteering for the American Legion on local, district and state levels. “There are many Veteran programs that need help in many ways. It gives us both great pleasure in giving back to those who gave so much,” said Dean.

Lynette is married to Kraig Dean also on the GSM board. She has 2 children – a daughter living in Westminster, MD and a son on the Big Island in Hawaii. Lynette has four grandchildren, one of her biggest bragging points.

Both of her parents were active in the German Society. She and her husband joined and helped when they could. With the passing of her mother Isolde, and when her father, Dandridge Brooke, GSM lifetime director, could no longer drive to the meetings, Lynette began to take a more active role in the Society. It is now a family activity.

Lynette said “I was very honored to be asked to be on the board of this wonderful organization. It is really important that we are ever mindful of many Germans that have contributed to this country and that we keep those memories of our loved ones alive.”

Robert Wisch

Robert E. Wisch was born on Smallwood Street in Southwest Baltimore the second of two sons to Henry and Viola Wisch. He graduated from Baltimore Polytechnic Institute in 1955 and attended McCoy College, the Johns Hopkins



University evening school. After working for the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company for twelve years, he became a manufacturers’ representative of lighting and electrical products covering four states and the District of Columbia. He retired in 2007.

Mr. Wisch married Linda Oster in 1968 and moved to Baltimore County where they lived until 1979 when they moved to Howard County. They moved to Anne Arundel County in 1993 and presently live in a very old log and stone house on the Magothy River.

In the late fifties Mr. Wisch enlisted in the 175th Regiment, 29th Division of the Maryland National Guard and served as an officer in the regiment for ten years. Presently he is the National Commander of the 29th Division Association and commander of the Veteran Corps Fifth Regiment Infantry.

Robert Wisch has been a member of the Masonic fraternity as well as being a Shriner for over fifty years. His daughter, Susan, is a 1997 graduate of the United States Naval Academy and his son-in-law, Commander Patrick Murphy is commander of the destroyer, U.S.S. Bainbridge. Bob and Linda have two grandchildren, Molly and Fionn.

On the Firing Line with the Germans

The Library of Congress Releases Restored WWI Film

The Library of Congress, aptly on November 11, 2016, released the 1915 Wilbur H. Durborough film, 'On the Firing Line with the Germans'. The film (108 minutes) can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=958QR_Cdg5U&feature=youtu.be.

What is so special about this film is that it was filmed by Americans. American filmmaker Wilbur H. Durborough and his cameraman Irving G. Ries left for Germany in March 1915. Durborough (10-11-1882 to 4-4-1946), a native of Delaware, was hired by S.T. Hughes of the Newspaper Enterprise Association to photograph the war. Ries (1-15-1890 to 8-20-1963), who spoke German, was brought on after a group of Chicago businessmen invested in the film project. They also purchased the Stutz Bearcat, which is seen in several of the frames, proudly displaying her American flag and Press placard. Of course, this was accomplished prior to the United States entry in the war, which occurred in April 1917.

The film was originally released in 1915 but disappeared from public view after April 1917 and considered lost. Miscellaneous reels of this film were found in the wine cellar of a Chicago businessman and donated to the National Archives who copied 13 reels and sent 32 remaining original reels for storage in the nitrate vaults of the Library of Congress. When film scholars James W. Castellan, Ron van Dopperen and Cooper C. Graham were able to determine the detailed content of the original film and find the remaining missing scenes in NARA's WWI film collection, a Library of Congress team was able to restore this lost film. George Willeman and Lynanne Schweighofer painstakingly examined each frame with a hand cranked frame viewer in a special room to maintain the integrity of the nitrate film to select the best film from the many duplicates. These were then cleaned, digitized and

assembled based on the guidance and expertise of the film scholars.



The scenes are remarkable for their age and what we can assume was their condition. The film opens with the trip to Europe, picking up the Bearcat in Holland and then you have over one hour of war scenes complete with parades, German Royalty, hospitals, castles, the Hamburg Derby, bombed out cities, prison camps and so much more. Most of the scenes capture the young and innocent leaving their hometowns, boarding trains and heading to the front or those left behind, both pre and post bombing. You cannot help but wonder if the young men returned and if they did, did they return

whole? You cannot help but reflect the hardships and pain of war when you can vividly see the faces of the young men.

Durborough and Ries returned to the US on September 30, 1915 and the first viewing of the film was in Milwaukee on November 28. It enjoys a great momentum until the US enters the war and like so many other things that relate to Germany, becomes part and parcel of the forced amnesia to those of German ancestry.

So what is the Maryland connection? This film shows images that were

brought to life back here in Baltimore by Henry L. Mencken. Mencken covered Germany during 1916/1917 and the images bring his stories to life. With the release of the movie, also released was a new publication on WWI by the Library of America, "World War I and America: Told by the Americans Who Lived It", that features a story by Mencken. On February 1, 1917, the day after his return to Berlin, Mencken wrote a detailed journal entry that became "Berlin at Time of Break." This became the first of a series of articles published by the *Sun* entitled "The Diary of a Retreat," which was a chronicle of Mencken's observations of Germany during 1917 and his subsequent return journey to the United States. This initial installment has been included in the latest Library of America volume, edited by Pulitzer Prize-winning author A. Scott Berg. To read this installment, see https://loa-shared.s3.amazonaws.com/static/pdf/Mencken_Retreat.pdf

Additional reading and resources:

An American filmed the German army in WWI-until they became the enemy-Washington Post:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/an-american-filmed-the-german-army-in-wwi--until-they-became-the-enemy/2017/02/06/4e9128b6-c285-11e6-a453-19cc4b3d09ba_story.html?utm_term=.0c002f4d157f

Journal of Film Presentation article about the institutions, events and individuals that enabled this lost film to be reconstructed:

<http://shootingthegreatwar.blogspot.com/2015/06/back-to-1915-reconstructing-wh.html>

Book review in the Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television:

<http://shootingthegreatwar.blogspot.nl/2017/01/book-review-american-cinematographers.html>

A must read: Film annotations, describing the making of Wilbur H. Durborough's World War I feature film "On the Firing Line with the Germans (USA, 1915) by authors Cooper C. Graham, Ron van Dopperen, James Castellan.

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/56316721/quoton-the-firing-line-with-the-germansquot-usa-1915>

Save the Eagle

Zion's famous eagle, completed in 1913 by renowned sculptor, Hans Schuler (5-25-1874 to 3-30-1951), is in danger. The Eagle was commissioned by Zion's pastor, Julius Hofmann. He and Hans Schuler were good friends.

Pastor Hofmann stood his ground when the eagle was challenged during World War I, and refused to remove the eagle. He explained that the sculpture consisted of two eagles...the large American eagle and smaller German eagle in the center, symbolizing the German immigrant at the heart of America. It represents the immigrant's loyalty to their new home with the love of the homeland in their heart.

Now over 100 years old the eagle is showing its age. Water hasn't drained properly and has pooled on the balcony and seeped through the masonry onto the eagle. The entire structure now suffers from mortar loss and erosion.

Now in consultation with restoration professionals Zion is working to repair the balcony to ensure proper drainage and to clean and restore this symbol of German-American unity. Zion has secured a \$15,000 grant toward the \$30,000 project, but it is a 'matching' grant. To assist Zion in their efforts, a 'Go Fund Me' page has been established to raise the necessary funds. You may contribute via [https://www.gofundme.com/save-the-](https://www.gofundme.com/save-the-eagle-at-zion)



eagle-at-zion or send any donations directly to Zion at 400 E. Lexington Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. Just mark 'Save the Eagle' on the check. If everyone of German heritage contributed \$5.00, we could match in record time.

Picnic-Continued



members to view the bust of General John Stricker as a thank you for lending the monument to their display in the new visitor's center. Please visit the park and see the bust at this location as it will soon be moving to the final location near his headquarters during the Battle of North Point.

On display was our partnership with local German businesses that have like minded owners who promote our society's mission. Each contributed to our success and we thank each of them for their contributions to the picnics success.

We dined on delicious Brezeln donated by Das Pretzel Haus, all handmade and personally delivered by owner Hank Ward. He also helped

us setup and was able to meet many of our members before heading to the German Embassy to deliver more pretzels.

Our main course was delicious Bratwurst and Frankfurters from Binkert's Meat grilled by president, Kurt Wittstadt.

We washed it down with authentic Reinheitsgebot Pils, Dunkles und Maibock from Gunpowder Falls Brewing. Braumeister Martin Virga was on hand to serve and discuss the great German beers that he makes. This made for great discussions amongst our beer aficionados who will tell you how it is far superior to any of the commercial German breweries.

We cleaned it all up with the donated materials and time from Patrick Richter, owner of Waste Neutral. His company is environmentally friendly and helps keep our parks clean.

To round it all out, a special thank you to all of our members for providing delicious side dishes and desserts. Based on the display, I think we may have a good competition next year for best German side dish and dessert. All were delectable and represented various regions of German speaking countries. Be on the lookout for next year's picnic and remember to spread the word to your families as the children had a wonderful time playing outdoors. See you at the next picnic!

Please visit the following local businesses or contact them at the following:

Das Pretzel Haus - to purchase, please visit: www.thetasteofgermany.com

Gunpowder Falls Brewing: www.gunpowderfallsbrewing.com

Binkert's German Meats: www.binkerts.com

Waste Neutral: www.wasteneutral.com

Join the German Society of Maryland

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Spouse (Optional): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Referred by: _____

“I hereby apply to be a member of the German Society of Maryland”

Annual dues \$25.00. Spouse included at no extra cost..

I wish my newsletter to be sent via email at the above email address:

I wish my newsletter to be sent through US postage at the above postal address:

Lifetime Membership: \$250.00

Mail to:

The German Society of Maryland
P.O. Box 22585
Baltimore, Maryland 21203-4585

Documentary Honors Schuler Family Legacy

A new documentary is being produced that explores the rich legacy of the Schuler Family and their dedication to the arts and to teaching art in the style of the Old Masters. The documentary entitled, ‘Mastered’, produced by Jill Yesko, aims to bring the Schuler’s to the attention of the general public. The German Society honored the Schuler Family Legacy at the Annual Awards Dinner in 2013. Today the public is unaware of the legacy of the Schuler Family. Many of the great monuments in Maryland are the work of Hans Schuler and his family continues those traditions in their school located on Lafayette Avenue.

‘Mastered’ is told through interviews with the Schulers. It also touches on the importance of



the Schuler family's many contributions to Maryland, specifically to the design and construction of classic monuments to Martin Luther and other figures of historical importance. Here is the trailer for the project: <https://vimeo.com/hartlove/review/207813874/de84f908d3>.

The producers are soliciting tax-deductible contributions so that film-

ing can be completed. The intent is to show the film in Maryland and make it available to institutions such as the Maryland Historical Society, the Museum of Industry, the Walters Art Museum, the Maryland Institute College of Art, and other cultural and educational institutions.

Your contribution will help preserve the legacy of the Schuler family and make this legacy available to thousands of people in Maryland and beyond.

Please contact Jill Yesko at 410-274-1606 or via email at jreyesko@gmail.com

Visit the Schuler School Page for information about the school.

<http://www.schulerschool.com/>

Meet Our Director – Theodore J. Potthast, Jr.



He was born on May 3, 1931 in Baltimore City. His father was the son of German immigrants, John from Westphalia and Margareta Leib from Bavaria. His mother was Marie, the daughter of Thomas Corcoran and Katherine Burke, both of County Galway, Ireland. He was a graduate of Loyola High School, St. Louis University, and Georgetown Law School. In 1958 he married Constance Fava. They had 4 children: Catherine, John, Mark and Marialena.

Ted joined the German Society in 1966, following the lead of his father who was then a Director of the Society.

Ted's first office was as a member of the Executive Committee under President Charles Stein. He was elected a Director in the 1970's and as counsel to the Society. He became President for a year in 1986-87. Later, he again served as President for 3 years, 1993-96. He was elected Treasurer in 2008 and currently serves as such.

Ted had a brief teaching career: Latin and English to high school seniors, economics at the University of Baltimore and health law in its graduate school, but teaching was hard work, so he took the easy way out and went into law.

He practiced law for 50 years from 1962 until retiring in 2012. (He has retained his license and still handles legal matters for a few old clients.) During his career, he was a busy trial lawyer for many years, specializing in eminent domain, representing governments and private individuals. He also set up numerous businesses and served as their lawyer. He served as general counsel for many non-profit organizations including the Baltimore County Board of Education, Saint Joseph Medi-

cal Center and Fallston General Hospital, The School Sisters of Notre Dame, The Maryland Bail Bond Association and others. He served as Chairman of the Health Law Committee of the Maryland State Bar Association. A goodly part of his legal practice includes wills, trusts and estates. (His daughter Catherine is also a lawyer, a partner in a Towson law firm.)

All his children are members of our Society, his son Mark having served a term as a Director. His father served as a Director for nearly 50 years until his death at age 93. In the mid-1940's the President and some other officers of the Society went to his grandfather's factory and invited him to join the Society. His response: "I'm too old; take my son." Thus the beginning of the relationship of the Potthast family and the German Society. More than 20 family members are now members. Ted has been a member for 50+ years.

Ted has mentored many of the other past presidents and officers and has been a valuable asset to the German Society of Maryland.

FREE STUDENT MEMBERSHIPS

We encourage all students from first grade through university level to become student members of our Society. Email their name, grade or level, and name of the school to the Society at germansociety@verizon.net and stating that you wish to become a student member. This is FREE. **NO ANNUAL DUES!**

Help the German Society be more efficient and save paper. If you have an email address and would like to receive your 'Vereinsnachrichten' via email, send an email to Bärbel Otto at germansociety@verizon.net.

This action alone saves paper and postage costs.

You may then print the Vereinsnachrichten in full color.

We hope to hear from you!

In Sympathy

The German Society is saddened by the passing of our dear members. We extend our sincere sympathies to their families and friends.

Volker Karl Schmeissner

Volker was a native born German, born in Stuttgart on November 28, 1935, son of a Methodist minister and a middle school teacher. He grew up in Tübingen and studied electrical engineering at the Technische Hochschule in Stuttgart. He studied French, Geography and Sport at the University of Tübingen. Volker emigrated to the United States in 1961. He received his Master's degree in German literature from Yale, where he also spent additional years in advanced studies. He began teaching at the University of Maryland in 1967. In the 70s and 80s he taught German at several regional colleges and universities. In the mid-80s he joined the staff at Northern Virginia Community College. His love of teaching German language and literature led him to provide classes at the Zion Lutheran Church in Baltimore, the Baltimore Kickers Club, and during numerous Oktoberfeste in the region.

Volker lived in the Washington suburbs, but could always be found at the German events in and around Maryland as well. He was President of the German American Heritage Society at the beginning of the 21st Century and in that position gave several presentations and speeches addressing the important contributions of Germans to both Washington DC and surrounding areas. He was also active in the Society for German-American Studies, Schlaraffia Washington, the Concord Club of Washington



DC, the Arminius Masonic Lodge #25, and of course, the German Society of Maryland. On a national level, Volker was a member of the German American Committee of the USA and the Steuben Society. He was a member of the German World Alliance.

Volker was awarded the German-American Friendship Award and the Bundesverdienstkreuz am Bande from the German Government in recognition of his work promoting the German culture and heritage.

He passed away on February 4, 2017 at the age of 81. Volker will be best remembered as a true missionary for the German language. He is survived by his wife Hannelore, his son Peter and daughter-in-law Maria and his grandchildren. He is also survived by his brother Hanns and sister Brigitte, both living in Germany.

A memorial service was held on February 10th at the United Church/Vereinigte Kirche on G. Street in Washington DC.

Leo Otterbein

Leo E. Otterbein, a member of the German Society and a Baltimore psychologist and educator passed away on March 10, 2017. He was 74.

The son of Frank J. Otterbein, a grain merchant, and Marie Hofstetter Otterbein, a homemaker, Leo Eugene Otterbein was born in Baltimore. He was the grandson of the co-founder of Otterbein Bakery, which opened in Baltimore in 1881.

He attended Mt. St. Joseph High School and received his bachelor's degree in education from Loyola University in 1964, and later his master's degree in English from Loyola.

Mr. Otterbein taught at Mergenthaler Vocational-Technical High School, the Community College of Baltimore, Towson University, Loyola University and Morgan State University.

He earned a doctorate of education from the Johns Hopkins University in 1981. He was a licensed psychologist and had a private practice in Lutherville. He worked with children with learning disabilities.

He enjoyed DIY projects, playing drums, baking bread and genealogy. He enjoyed eating breakfast out, going to flea markets and completing The New York Times crossword puzzle.

Mr. Otterbein is survived by his wife of 49 years, Grace (Alessi) and his two sons, Angelo Otterbein of Monkton and Leo E. Otterbein of Boston; a daughter, Maria Berrettini of Lutherville; a brother, Frank Otterbein of Catonsville; and eight grandchildren.

Mr. Otterbein was laid to rest at Dulaney Valley Memorial Gardens.

The 2017 AATG Awards

On April 23, 2017, the German Society took part in the 2017 Awards Ceremony for Maryland Students of German. The German Society is a co-sponsor with the American Association of Teachers of German (MD-DC Metro Chapter).

The event was held in the beautiful and historic Zion Adlersaal. Fifty-three (53) students from nine (9) schools received the 'Gold' honor for scoring in the 90th percentile and above.



*Sarah Ross-2016 Award Winner
Gerhard Meinzer Award Winner*

The GSM's Education chair, Dr. Maureen Helinski, presented the GSM's college scholarships to Rachael Zehring and Katherine Mosely, both from the University of Maryland, College Park.

The German Society also heard from last year's recipient of the Gerhard Meinzer Summer Study Award, Ms. Sarah Ross. This year's recipient Susanna Offenbacher of Mt. Hebron High School received her award at the German Society of Maryland's Annual Meeting on Friday April 21.

The ceremony was followed by entertainment from the Spotsylvania Alpentänzer, from Courtland High School.

Studying German in Maryland? Interested in our Scholarships? Visit If you are interested in our scholarships, please visit our website at <http://www.germansociety-md.com/education.htm>.



2017 Gerhard Meinzer Award Winner, Susanna Offenbacher-Mt. Hebron

German Society holds Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting was held on Friday, April 21 at Zion Church of the City of Baltimore. During this meeting, outgoing President, Anton Smoot, thanked his Board as well as Past Presidents for all of their assistance during his tenure. He spotlighted some of the major accomplishments during his term, which included the final place of honor for our 'Stricker Monument', which will be at National Guard Armory, the great 'Deutschland' exhibit at the Maryland Historical Society, and in this writer's opinion, his greatest accomplishment, reaching out to the young people and energizing the youth about their heritage.

During the meeting, Treasurer Potthast and Investment Advisor, Tom Werner, gave very positive reviews of the German Society's finances. We also were able to witness Susanna Offenbacher being presented with the Gerhard Meinzer award for summer study. Ms. Offenbacher will study in Berlin this summer thanks to the generosity of Board member, Gerhard Meinzer.

Votes were taken to confirm the continued service of directors Paul Otto, Kraig Dean, Hall Worthington and Shirley Santora. New directors voted

in were Zachary Butt, Lynette Dean and Robert Wisch. Shirley Santora and Paul Gerhard Otto were confirmed as 'Lifetime Directors' at the May 4th Board meeting.

During the Annual meeting in April, the following amendment to the German Society's by-laws passed:

HONORARY MEMBERS

The Board of Directors may designate any person who, in the opinion of the board has made a significant contribution to the mission of the Society or has brought honor upon the heritage of the German American community of Maryland, as an Honorary Member of the Society.

Any person who shall have been named an honoree at the Society's Annual Awards Banquet shall become an Honorary Member of the Society upon designation by the President of the Society.

Honorary Members shall not be required to pay dues.

OFFICERS

Kurt D. Wittstadt-President
Dr. James D. Schaub-1st VP
Steven Harper-2nd VP
Dr. Maureen Helinski-Secretary
Theodore J. Potthast, Jr.-Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Zachary Butt
Craig Dean
Lynette Dean
Gerhard Meinzer
Anton Smoot
Robert Wisch
Elizabeth K. Wittstadt
Gen. M. Hall Worthington
Gail Zik

EX OFFICIO

President- Women's Auxiliary
Eva Maus Kelleher

LIFETIME DIRECTORS

Shelley 'Dolch' Arnold
John K. Aymold, Jr.*
Dandridge Brooke
Linda Butt
Dr. David Denisch
Prof. Dr. Mohamed Esa
Brigitte V. Fessenden*
Dr. Maureen Helinski
Prof. Dr. Armin Mruck
Michael J. Nieberding*
Betty Niemann
Rev. H.J.Siegfried Otto *
Paul Gerhard Otto
Bernard Penner, Esq.
Theo. J. Potthast, Jr., Esq.*
Shirley Santora
Dr. James Schaub*
Irma Tillman
Dr. Mary Upman
Christel van der Berg
Thomas A. Werner*
Hon. Gerard W. Wittstadt
* = past president

OFFICE MANAGER

Bärbel Otto

*Past newsletters are posted on our website, www.germansociety-md.com,
as is our history, 'Pioneers in Service'.*

*For more German-American happenings check the website for the
Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von Maryland at
www.md-germans.org or www.GermanMarylanders.org.*

*This newsletter is published by The German Society of Maryland,
founded in 1783 by Act of the General Assembly of Maryland. It is a
non-profit, tax exempt corporation pursuant to the provisions of
§501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.*

Please submit articles or items of interest to

Shelley Arnold, Editor at bnsarnold7@gmail.com

The German Society of Maryland

P.O. Box 22585

Baltimore, Maryland 21203-4585

410-685-0450

Email: germansociety@verizon.net

Visit us on the web

www.germansociety-md.com

Dr. Maureen Helinski,
Webmaster



Find us on
Facebook
