

President's Message-Shelley Arnold

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The Story of Ruth Redemptioners

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

This is the last issue of the 'Vereinsnachrichten' for the year 2020. I cannot help but shout Alleluia, Amen, drop the Time Square ball. Bill and I do not normally go out on New Year's Eve, in fact most years we are asleep before the clock strikes midnight. I can guarantee you that we will be awake this year...not to welcome the New Year, but to make sure 2020 slithers away. For what can only be described as the strangest year in my lifetime, I for one will be happy to see it end. The truth is that every man, woman and child have been impacted in some way. Some are again working, many are not. Many are working with reduced income, retirees with losses to their retirement savings and jobs no longer available. Many industries have been impacted beyond repair. I recently read that 85% of independent restaurants will not bounce back, but in fact close as a result of COVID. Retail stores remain diligent in social distancing, masks and limited numbers in their stores. Many children are being schooled online. This means less money spent on school clothes, but possibly more on IT and probably wine for Mom. I think we will struggle with COVID for years to

come, especially the unforeseen consequence of COVID, such as the mental health issues that have impacted every age group of our society.

Were there any COVID positives? People without computer skills learned to Zoom and became more familiar and comfortable with computers. Nurses, doctors, firefighters, EMTs, received the kudos they truly deserve, however, other first responders, our police officers, had a pretty tough year beyond COVID.

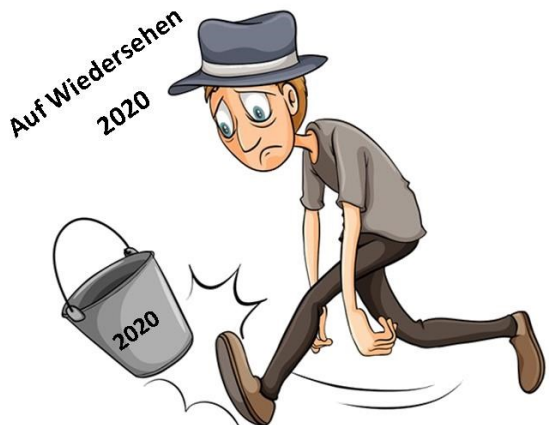
Our directors and members learned to adjust, persevere and in some cases grow. Many of our directors worked hard to maintain some sense of normalcy. Amy Unverzagt continued working. As an employee of the local Health Department, she learned to work from home, as well as picking up additional duties to help with COVID testing. Shirley Santora took a different route and picked up a few new skills such as making pierogis from scratch. She also took the time to catch up on her reading and gardening. My husband and I used the first four or five months to paint the entire house, remodel completely one bedroom and update the others,



as well as catch up on many other projects. The Butts also took to making repairs on their older home repairing wallpaper, complicated by their 12-14 foot ceilings. They also became the proud grandparents of twins and volunteered to help with their son's growing family of three young babies. Anton Smoot also worked around the house catching up on his 'Honey Do List'. He became a plumber, painter, power washer, electrician and tree trimmer. Bill Kommelan used the time to make some final repairs to his home that was severely damaged during Isabel. They replaced most of the house immediately following the storm, and COVID provided them with the opportunity to further improve. They replaced lost soil behind their bulkhead and laid new sod and a new brick walkway to their road. (Continued on page -2-)

## Unser Kalender

October 28	Board Meeting	7:00 via Zoom
November 19	Executive Committee	6:30 PM via Zoom



**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](http://www.germansociety-md.com)  
**Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein:**  
[www.md-germans.org](http://www.md-germans.org)  
**German Marylanders:**  
[www.germanmarylanders.org](http://www.germanmarylanders.org)  
**German American Radio:**  
[germanamericanradio.com](http://germanamericanradio.com)

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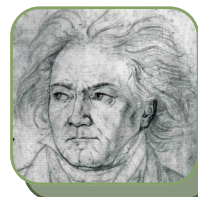
Bill was also very grateful for the IT and his ability to stay in contact with his family and friends. Ted Potthast found something as simple as a haircut become a challenge, when he stated he looked like a ‘hippie’ when he looked in the mirror. His son finally cut his hair. Hair was also on Shirley’s mind when she learned how to color her own hair. It is amazing what we can do when our options are limited.

What has been the most difficult...what are we missing? We are social animals and need human interaction. I miss feeling my grandchildren’s arms around my neck or the little one holding my hand. I miss meeting with friends for a warm summer night gathering. I miss going to church, even though I will give my pastors credit as COVID heroes by not

missing one week’s service (their online services are the bomb). I miss all of the wonderful events that our German American community plans throughout the year. We missed them all... cancelled. I miss you, our membership. I wish we could ring in the new year tomorrow and that this pandemic would end. We can then gather at our many great events and the big topic will be how we survived. We could laugh at the early stages of no toilet paper and Lysol costing as much on the black market as a bushel of crabs (which were also outrageous this year). We could cry together when we speak of lost loved ones and the difficulty of losing a loved one without contact. Most of all, I would say Auf Wiedersehen to 2020 and pray, “Never Again”.

I wish for you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful, pandemic free New Year. I pray for your good health and happiness. Don’t be surprised if I hug you!

## Happy Birthday Mr. Beethoven



We are not certain of Ludwig van Beethoven’s birth, but do know he was baptized Catholic at

the Parish of St. Remigius on December 17<sup>th</sup> 1770. The custom at that time was to have the child baptized within 24 hours of birth. So his birth is celebrated in December. He was born in Bonn, Germany and is one of the most admired composers in the classical genre. His early instruction was from his father and it is said his home was quite dysfunctional. He later studied with composer Christian Neefe. He moved to Vienna at the age of 21 and made this his home base. Just as his namesake, his grandfather Ludwig van Beethoven, he left Germany to go to Austria, whereas his grandfather left Austria (Mechelen..now in Belgium) at the age of 21 and moved to Bonn. Beethoven died March 26, 1827, at the age of 56. He died in Vienna. To read more see: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ludwig\\_van\\_Beethoven](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ludwig_van_Beethoven)



## Which German Word is the Hardest to Pronounce?

The German Embassy asked this recently on their Twitter feed and here are some of the responses:

Für Amerikaner:

Brötchen, Rührei, Eichhörnchen, Quietscheentchen, Streichholzschächtelchen, Fünf-

hundertfünfundfünfzig, Schlittschuhlaufen, Polizeigewalt, Ich, Lehrerin,

And of course:

Donaudampfschiffahrtselektrizitätenhauptbetriebswerkbauunterbeamtengesellschaft. Their meanings:

Buns, scrambled eggs, squirrels, rubber ducks, matchboxes, five hundred



and fifty-five, ice skating, police violence, me, teacher and Danube Steamship Electricity main depot building subordinate company

And the photo: Klimaschutzumsetzungsgerätfestmachstelle, which means: Climate protection implementation device mooring point.

What about you? What is the hardest German word for you to pronounce. Make sure you follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/SocietyMaryland>

## Erntedankfest

Sunday October 4, 2020

Germany's rendition of Thanksgiving is called Erntedankfest meaning, 'Harvest Thanks Festival'.

In Germany, it is a festival that is usually observed on the first Sunday of October following Michaelmas, which is celebrated on September 29th. It is a festival celebrated in the churches and throughout the towns. The celebrations may last the entire day with services, music, dancing and lots of *Gemütlichkeit*, usually capped off with fireworks.

In some towns the turkey has actually replaced the goose.

The US didn't really start celebrating Thanksgiving until 1941 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a bill creating the national holiday.

## Welcome New Members



James Eberwein

Ilka Knüppel

Linda & Michael McManus

David Ptak

## Henry Gunther-Last Soldier Killed in WWI



6-5-1895 to 11-11-1918 @ 10:59 a.m.)

Born in Baltimore of German descent, Henry was a United States Army World War I Soldier. He was the last American casualty of World War I. He was serving with Company A, 313th Infantry Regiment, 79th Division, as it

was advancing toward Metz when it was announced that the Armistice would take effect at 11:00 a.m. on November 11. Despite this an attack was ordered, and as his unit was advancing they ran into a German ambush near the village of Chaumont-devant-Damvillers. Enraged at what appeared to be a German double-cross, he charged with his bayonet and was shot within a few yards of the German position. General Pershing officially recognized him as the last American death in

his Order of the Day for November 11 announcing the Armistice. Gunther was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and his body was returned home to Baltimore in 1923. His story is told in Joseph E. Persico's "Eleventh Month, Eleventh Day, Eleventh Hour." (bio by: Paul F. Wilson)

Gunther is buried at Most Holy Redeemer Cemetery and in the past the Society has held a memorial service. The last was at the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death on November 11, 2018.



## German Christmas Markets-What's so Special?

By Shelley Arnold

I may not be the best person to write this article. I am biased. As a Christmas geek, Germany's Christmas markets are enchanting, mesmerizing, some may even say bewitching. I am a regular Christmas market visitor, having been to approximately 50 over the past 20 years. They mark the beginning of my Christmas holiday. Unfortunately, COVID now prohibits me from making my annual trek. So we will visit the glorious German Christmas markets through words.

First, the Christmas Markets (Christkindlmarkt, Weihnachtsmarkt) are a staple in Germany with Munich grabbing bragging rights as the first in approximately 1310, followed by Dresden's Strietzelmarkt in 1434 and Augsburg in 1498. It is thought that Vienna's original December Market began in 1294. They begin with Advent (usually the end of November) and end on Christmas Eve. The size of the market varies, with larger markets such as those in Munich, Nuremberg, Vienna, Dresden and many others, offering 100 or more stalls. Don't discount the smaller markets, some with only 10-20 stalls, but with exceptional offerings, especially handmade



Rothenburg ob der Tauber

folk crafts, etc. One of my favorites is the market in Dinkelsbühl. The market here is opened each year by the school children entertaining the crowd with the town's favorite Christmas Carol, 'Ihr Kinderlein kommet' written in Dinkelsbühl by Christoph von Schmid. Two of my additional favs are Rothenburg ob der Tauber and Seiffen. Rothenburg is one of the prettiest and most quaint of German cities and at Christmas it is like looking a Christmas card. Last year I had my photo taken with Christian, the largest Nutcracker in the world, located in Rothenburg in front of the Wohlfahrt Christmas shop. Don't leave Rothenburg without your Schneeballen. Seiffen, on the other hand, is the Christmas village. The entire town decorates and many of the inhabitants are the very woodcrafters that make the pyramids, Schwibbogens, angels and miners, and many more of the traditional woodcrafts.

So what is so magical? Besides the fact that the markets are surrounded by lights and either flanked by the most beautiful churches or an old historic castle.....well talk is cheap.... let's just begin our walk.

Walking through rows of little stalls that are filled with the most delightful treats, ornaments, gifts and some of the most fantastic culinary delights in Germany, are only a small part of the wonder. In some cities the stalls themselves take on special Christmas décor as vendors decorate their roof with reindeer, elves, Santa, angels, huge candy canes and more. Some are mechanical and some are just plain magical.



Dresden's 'Frauenkirche' Weihnachtsmarkt

As we walk, we are captivated by the smells and sounds of the markets. Close your eyes and you can hear the Bratwurst sizzling on the open grills, and smell the fresh gingerbread and the awesome scent of Glühwein, that delectable mulled wine mixed with just the right amount of sugar, rum, and cinnamon. This is a dual purpose wine, making you feel good and keeping you warm on the often bitter cold evenings of the markets. The Glühwein is served in a special mug, which usually has the town and the date and a cute Christmas scene. The mugs are one of my special collections. The markets are the place to be if you are a foodie. Besides the sausage and gingerbread, how about some baked apples or real chestnuts roasting on an open fire? Sweets  
*Continued on page -6-*

## KRIMSKRAM

### What makes Germans so Orderly?

On the surface, “Ordnung muss sein” seems to be the foundation of German personal and social conduct. But, stereotypes aside, is Germany really “orderly”? As with many things “German”, the answer may go back to Martin Luther. In addition to forever changing how Germany (and the world) worships, many of the humble Reformationist’s personal preferences (from a love of beer to books to severe Bauhaus-inspiring design) have continued to shape German culture for the last 500 years. In fact, according to volume 67 of his *Sämmtliche Werke* text, it was the jowly monk himself who appears to have first written the earliest iteration of the expression.

To read more go to:

[http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20200531-what-makes-germans-so-orderly?fbclid=IwAR0mbXhtr2MI0najA\\_6xxf\\_KJsDvDhijaV8L3sbBEQnb\\_CLzgv6acxkbOM](http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20200531-what-makes-germans-so-orderly?fbclid=IwAR0mbXhtr2MI0najA_6xxf_KJsDvDhijaV8L3sbBEQnb_CLzgv6acxkbOM)

### Studying German in School

Studying German in school is not only useful, it’s fun! Tune in to German class at

@HaddonfieldHS, the winner of this year’s video contest among German bilingual schools in the US. <https://twitter.com/i/status/1272231644875931649>

### American Universities vs. German Universities: The Differences

Though you can’t avoid the reading or the due dates, studying at a German university can differ in some significant ways from the United States. The obvious differences are that courses are, generally, conducted in German. But there are a few less obvious things to consider when trying to study full-time abroad.

#### Basically free

Probably the “least best kept secret” about German schools are their low cost. In 2015, all 16 German states had officially gotten rid of tuition fees. There is still a small fee to cover administration and other costs per semester and often housing is paid for separately from the university, but generally it is very cheap compared to the tuition costs at American schools.

#### Public vs. private universities

Since public universities in Germany are free, it makes them that much more competitive. Want to be a doctor? You better have almost perfect grades and Abitur score (university qualifying exam) to even be admitted. Though private universities are still high quality, most students would choose no tuition over even the low tuition of a private school.

Read more at

<http://germanyinusa.com/2020/06/11/german-vs-american-universities/>

### Travel Ache During COVID-19

German has a word for everything.

'Fernweh' describes a deep inner urge to travel. It combines 'fern' ('far')

**fernweh (n)**  
farsickness: an urge to travel even stronger than wanderlust



with 'weh' ('pain', 'suffering'). So 'Fernweh' is the pain of not being far away. Read David Farley’s article, ‘The travel ‘ache’ you can’t translate’ that goes beyond ‘Wanderlust’ to describe the pain some feel when unable to travel. His article, written for the BBC may be read in its entirety at

<https://twitter.com/GermanyInUSA/status/1282303700858527750>.

### German Food Company will Rename a Popular Sauce



Knorr will rename a popular dressing because of ‘racist’ connotations. It will re-

name ‘Zigeunersauce’ or gypsy sauce’ to Paprika Sauce Hungarian Style’ reported the weekly ‘Bild’ in mid-August. They felt the sauce could be interpreted in a negative way and Knorr did not want that. Apparently an effort was made in 2013 to change the name, but the company rejected it and continued with the name Zigeunersauce’.

The terms “Zigeunersauce” has been used in Germany for more than 100 years to describe a hot tomato based sauce with small-chopped pieces of bell pepper, onions, vinegar and spices like paprika. It’s mostly served with meat, in fact, a popular Schnitzel is called ‘Zigeunerschnitzel’ or ‘Gypsy Schnitzel’ is commonplace in many German restaurants, both here and in Germany.



*Continued from page 4-*  
your thing...grab some Lebkuchen (all shapes and sizes), Stollen or Printen, especially if you are visiting Nuremberg (first to offer Lebkuchen), Dresden (first to offer and touted as the best Stollen), or Aachen (Printen is their specialty). Speaking of Nuremberg, what a blast to be there for their opening



*If you ever wondered what church is in many of the Schwibbogens and pyramids, it is the 'Miner's Church' in Seiffen. Many of the wonderful wood products, including the Blank and the Wendt & Kuhn Angels are made in Seiffen. It is the Christmas Village.*



of the markets. What can be more enchanting than a Christmas concert by candlelight in one of Germany's beautiful churches or castles.

All of this makes the market special, but what makes it magical..that belongs to the feeling you get at the mar-

ket..the lights, the smells, the sounds, the cold..all of this takes you back to a simpler and special time. As a child, Christmas couldn't be any more magical. As a child we waited with anticipation, often so excited, it was hard to focus on schoolwork and chores. The cold didn't bother us. As children, we could withstand bitter cold weather, whereas, today as an adult, it may take some

Glühwein. So my wish for you this Christmas is that this article takes you back. Close your eyes, imagine Christmas as a child, walk through the Christmas market, have a glass of Glühwein. Most of all I wish you good health, endless hope and peace.

I post something every day from December 1<sup>st</sup> to January 6<sup>th</sup> on my Facebook page, German Marylanders to help celebrate. Like I said...Christmas geek!

stacked and ready for the flight home. Don't forget your stocking stuffers...you can even buy the stockings!

If you are looking for that special gift, perhaps a Schwibbogen or a beautiful hand-made Creche, the market is the place. Speaking of the Creche, in almost every market you will find a life-size Creche and the Germans are particularly adept at making the most beautiful well-stocked man-gers possible. Just look for the Krip-pelmarkt.

Imagine now having your brat, a goodie bag filled with gifts, sipping on your Glühwein and the choir begins. Yes, many of the markets have entertainment throughout the day and night. Choirs are the most popular and it isn't uncommon to find a few all making the season bright via their renditions of the many great Christmas Carols coming out of Germany. Silent Night is so special in Austria (home of the Silent Night chapel in Oberndorf bei Salzburg) that it isn't performed until Christmas Eve. How special. Don't worry if you don't have time to listen during the day, because most of the churches offer Christmas concerts during the season and most are located in the same area

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*A decorated 'stall' in Nuremberg*

event, the Christkind brings the market to life. You can bring home a Rauschgöldengel (gold tinsel angel). Don't be upset if you can't make it to Nuremberg to see the angel, however, because the Christkind visits Zion's market each year as well (not this COVID year, but next year she will return).

Moving on we find many gift stalls. Toys, nutcrackers, candles..you name it they have it. Holiday decorations abound. Most have at least one stall dedicated to woodworkers where you can buy a special figure for your mantle, your tree or your manger...many carved while you watch. Little ornaments of every size, shape and material, gingerbread houses, advent wreaths and calendars, tree toppers, smokers, are

## *What do you really know about our retiring Office Manager?*

*„Nun ade, du mein lieb‘ Heimatland, lieb‘  
Heimatland, ade!*

*Es geht jetzt fort zum fernen Strand, lieb‘  
Heimatland, ade!*

*Und so sing ich denn mit frohem Mut,*

*Wie man singet, wenn man wandern tut, lieb‘  
Heimatland, ade!*

It was late spring of 1960, when Siegfried, my husband of just a few months, and I were standing on the deck of the ‘Seven Seas’, waving to his mother and my parents as they stood on the dock with the Bremerhaven emigration pastor. Siegfried had just been given the task of accompanying and giving spiritual care to a ship full of emigrants headed for Canada. We watched as our loved ones and the country that saw us come to life faded into the distance.

Before us, a new horizon, endless water and sky, countless adventures and a congregation waiting in Saskatchewan. Our shared life had begun.

While Siegfried worked as a pastor, preaching on Sundays and visiting on weekdays, I coped with music. While my schooling as organist was interrupted in Germany, once in Canada I practiced in our new little apartment, complete with a bed, desk, chair. It held a sofa for Siegfried and an upright piano for me. I entered music festivals, started a church choir with young farmers and played a pump organ in our little church in town. I continued organ lessons from a music teacher Siegfried knew from the Lutheran Seminary he had attended in Saskatoon.

But life went on and we moved east, leaving the prairies, fields of wheat, big skies and the northern lights and arrived at the shores of Lake Erie in Leamington, Ontario, tomato capital of the world. In Biggar, Saskatchewan, we served immigrants from Russian territories like Volhynia, but in Leamington we lived with German people from Poland and Romania, Siebenbürger Sachsen and Donauschwaben. They worked the tomato fields or in the Heinz factory producing what our children

later called the best tomato ketchup in the world. It was here our oldest daughter Ulrike was born. During those years a church was built, and I resumed my piano studies at the Michigan Conservatory in Detroit, where I played my first and only solo piano recital with works by Scarlatti, Haydn, Beethoven and Ravel.

The next 15 years changed us to cosmopolitan city dwellers. The Board of American Missions called Siegfried to work on a metropolitan study exploring the integration of immigrants in the North American Church structure. He was assigned to four Lutheran congregations in Toronto, two English, one German and one bilingual. Parish life here led to our meeting many expatriates as our little family was growing. Our son Paul was born when we were part of St. George’s Lutheran Church. We forged many friendships here centered around our common theme, how to feel at home in a new country after having left hardship or trauma in the old world.

My music expanded further as I studied at the Toronto Conservatory of Music. Here I was blessed with excellent teachers as well as the churches where I could practice on impressive instruments. Our German friends asked me to sing with them and Schola Cantorum was born, a group that I was leading with beloved German music, madrigals and motets but also introducing Canadian composers of our new world.

As my studies in Toronto concluded, we began working with a new set of people, the merchant seaman. Siegfried became Chaplain to Seamen in the port of Toronto, a post he held for some 14 years. Our trailer in Toronto harbor in cooperation with our colleagues from the Anglican Flying Angels was a gathering place for sailors to call home. Our home became refuge for people missing their families, an



international hub of sharing food, conversation and music, even a temporary shelter for an abandoned iguana.

Our children – by now there were four: Ulrike, family boss and certified babysitter, Paul-Gerhard, trying to maintain his place between two self-assuring girls, Susanne, always achieving and struggling with the fairness of life or absence thereof, and finally Benjamin, carefree and stealing the hearts of everyone around him. Growing up in a WASP area of Toronto, they still were exposed to a variety of cultures through the seamen’s ministry and our several congregations. I being organist in various churches – German, Estonian and a Finnish congregation, holding choir director positions in a Missouri congregation and the Danish Church of St. Ansgar.

As shipping patterns changed in the seventies, the smaller merchant ships were replaced by large container ships docking in Halifax, but not making our harbor. The sailors coming into the harbor were now poor and from third world countries. We began collecting clothes and other necessities for the sailors to take home. As the need for our presence became less and less, it was time to go back to the parish.

Montreal! Voilà, quelle surprise! New language laws drove many of the English speakers out. The new laws made French the default language. Our parish duties were not affected by  
*Continued on page –8-*



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this because it was German and English needed there, but our family life was very much affected. The law stated that children could only attend English schools if the parents were educated in the English school system in Quebec. There was a three year exemption. This played havoc with our children. Under the exemption our oldest, Ulrike, graduated in the English school system, Susanne and Benjamin were young enough to weather the transition to French, but Paul, would not fit under the three year rule, but also the English school he attended at our arrival closed, so we made the difficult decision to send him to a boarding school in Regina Saskatchewan, which may have led the way for two phenomena, one he ended here in the Baltimore community at Gilman, where for 20+ years he has served as staff. He is also the only one of our children living near us.

Our German community at St. John's in Montreal was composed largely of a group of immigrants from Romania called the Liebling. They came after World War I from a village called Liebling, an island of German life and culture. Many of those immigrants came to Canada to make money for their families left in Romania. They embraced our family for being there for them, whether it was sharing their highs and lows, entertaining the men after renovation work with food and drink, or little Benjamin sneaking into the "Golden Agers" meeting and being rewarded with the occasional dollar, just for speaking German to them.

Music in Montreal was exceptional. Living in walking distance of Place Des Arts with its Symphony Orchestra and Ballet, and McGill University, made it a cultural heaven. A great organ committee at the church negotiated with our famous organ builders and we had a Helmuth Wolff organ built right after he had completed



his classic French organ at McGill. This was a highlight of my career as a church musician. I was registrar for an International Organ Festival in Montreal in the last year of our stay.

***Baltimore. Bittersweet and exciting.***

Before I get into Baltimore, let me tell you about

DELKINA or GELKINA: German Interest Conference of North America. This is an organization of German Lutheran congregations in North America to support the German ministry for its members. It assists in finding German speaking ministers for all parishes in North America. It is a partnership with the Kirchliches Aussenamt of the EKD (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland). We were both involved in this organization. I remember one of our first conferences was in New York City in the early 60s, where we met Pastor Evers, then Pastor at Zion. We attended conferences throughout the U.S. and Canada. Siegfried was president at the time the call came from Zion in Baltimore. He had visited Pastor Penner the year before, shortly before his tragic death. When no apparent successor was in sight, Siegfried accepted the call to Zion in 1985.

Now this meant pulling up roots again, this time a little more drastically. Canada had become home, with my sister having made her home in Ontario, and our oldest daughter not falling under the family umbrella, securing our USA entry, so not being able to come with us. Was it a sign that the immigration officer was a member of Zion?

Thirty-five years in Baltimore, longer than anywhere else in our lives. As we settled into the ministry at Zion we also became members of the German Society in 1986. Working for and living as immigrants made it natural to get involved. So it was not long before Siegfried was invited to become a member of the board, both in the German Society of Maryland

and the Society of the History of the Germans in Maryland.

During our years at Zion being more of a minister's wife than a musician, I connected with people. The Zion Restoration campaign created many events that helped raise funds and create community. We had a Musical Review, concert with Hilary Hahn, a student in our Sunday School, an organist from Bosnia to raise awareness of the conflict in Eastern Europe. Orchestras and choirs from Germany and guest speakers like Dr. Zassenhaus and ambassador Nitze, just to mention a few that helped our campaign. Musical banquets, feasts of the Bach Society, rehearsals of the Baltimore Opera Company...all right outside my kitchen door. Yes, music was still a big part of my life, this time by singing, not only as a member Zion's church choir but also of the Baltimore Choral Arts Society.

My own involvement as the office manager of the German Society of Maryland began in the summer of 2002 when my predecessor Ilse von Veltheim relocated to her homeland of Germany. She had just started to develop a system whereby our members were entered into a computer data base. While computer issues remain to be a thorn in my side, the contact with our members is one of the most rewarding aspects of this job. It is gratifying to receive letters from people that moved away but still want to stay connected. Many people ask us for help in finding German translators for family documents of their ancestors or want information about loved ones that came or lived in Baltimore at one time. We get questions about German language lessons, scholarships and even pleas for German companionship for aging parents. The ins and outs that accompany our events was also part of my activities, both interesting and rewarding by assisting our directors in the preparations of our banquets,  
*Continued on page –11-*



## The 237th Anniversary Dinner

The German Society’s Anniversary Dinner has become another casualty of COVID. Unfortunately, with the many regulations associated with gathering and dining, it has become necessary to cancel our large gathering, normally held in November. Logistics for tables, masks, distancing, disinfecting, etc., cannot be accommodated by Zion, nor any of the restaurants the committee has contacted.

As a matter of historical significance, however, we feel that we should do something to 1) make certain the tradition is continued and 2) to assure that the COVID year is recognized and our response noted .

In order to do this, several of the Board members will meet for a meal to record as the anniversary dinner.

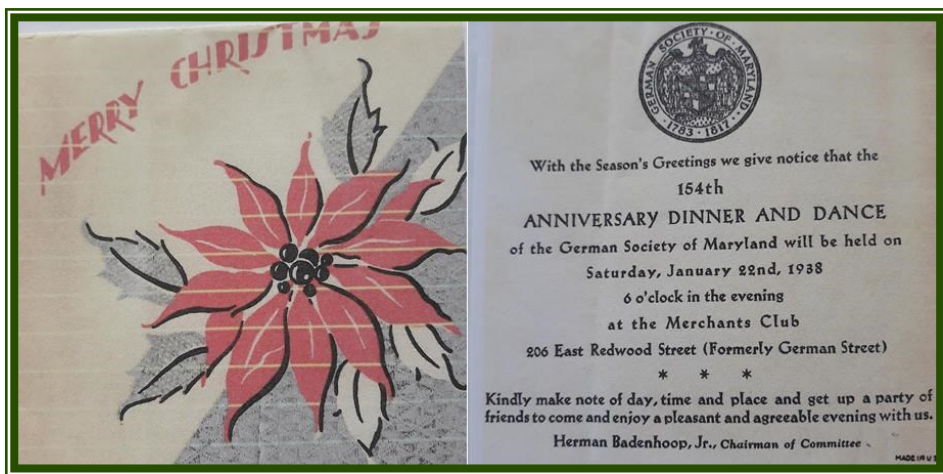
The dinner will be a small gathering on the planned date of November 7<sup>th</sup> and the costs will be totally absorbed by those attending, not the Society. The occasion will be marked and noted by a toast and one short speech to recognize the occasion and the fact that COVID did not stop us. We want you to join the festivities. Celebrate in the safety of your home. Toast our anniversary. Send the photos of you and your family celebrating our 237<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and we will print them in the next issue of the Vereinsnachrichten.

Just a little historical background, the Anniversary Dinner marks our founding in 1783, so this year is the 237th Anniversary Dinner.

The first dinner, however, was actually held in 1817. To make membership more attractive and to

grow their numbers, a grand banquet was held at Johann A. Kaminsky’s Hotel, which was located on Bank Street. The event was held on the 26th day of December. It was attended by most of the prominent German-Americans in the city. There were 13 official toasts and following each toast a popular and appropriate song was sung. The president at that time was Christian Mayer, a prominent German attorney, whose family emigrated from Ulm in Württemberg in 1784. His toast demonstrated the ulterior motive for the banquet, “May the legislature of our State be favorable to the objects and purpose of our society”, and spoke of the adoption of the laws for better protection of emigrants and redemptioners, submitted by the society to the legislature, then in session in Annapolis.

The event was a huge success, remembered and spoke of often by the citizens of Baltimore. More became aware of their goal and it was from efforts here that the legislature on the third of February, 1818, signed the Charter or Act of Incorporation granted in Chapter 100. The Act went on to provide the relief so necessary at the time, to enable the Society to aid the redemptioners. More about redemptioners in the next issue.



The invitation from the 154th Anniversary Dinner, held on January 22, 1938

## 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](mailto:germansociety@verizon.net) and stating that you wish to become a student member. This is FREE. **NO ANNUAL DUES WITH VALID EMAIL ADDRESS!**

## *German American Heritage Month*

As you know, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation in 2014 declaring October ‘German-American Heritage Month’. This was several years and multiple struggles in the making. It is about time that we celebrate our month. The Act specifically states in §13-405

*(a) The Governor annually shall proclaim the month of October as German-American Heritage Month in recognition of the contributions that German Americans have made to the State.*

*(b) The proclamation shall urge educational and cultural organizations to observe German-American Heritage Month properly with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.*

COVID has made it almost impossible to celebrate as witnessed by the almost 100% cancellation of all of our events. We are not going to let this happen this October. To celebrate German American Heritage month, we will be posting an influential German Marylander each day of the month and several additional posts on our festivals, music halls, clubs, and other contributions that have led the way we live today. So beginning October 1, look for our posts on our Facebook page and the German Marylanders Facebook page. I hope some of the other clubs share the posts. Keep in mind, this will cover about 30 profiles....there are hundreds, if not thousands more.

Take the time to read more about them, discuss them with the family... perhaps a dinner time conversation.

Be proud of your heritage and help your children understand and catch the ‘spirit’.

Date	Profile	Special Interest
1-Oct-20	Dr. Charles Frederick Wiesenthal	The German Society of Maryland
2-Oct-20	Babe Ruth	
3-Oct-20	Gustav Strube	German Schools
4-Oct-20	George Aloysius Frederick	
5-Oct-20	Jacob Small	Immigration Museum
6-Oct-20	Louis P. Hennighausen	
7-Oct-20	Hans Schuler	
8-Oct-20	John Stricker	German Battalion
9-Oct-20	Esskay Meats	
10-Oct-20	Henry H. VonderHorst	Schifferstadt
11-Oct-20	Goetz Candies	
12-Oct-20	Ottmar Mergenthaler	Hansa Haus
13-Oct-20	Theodore McKeldin	Schuetzen Parks
14-Oct-20	William Haussner	The German Festival
15-Oct-20	William Fuld	The German Singing Societies
16-Oct-20	Ferdinand Meyer	
17-Oct-20	Hiltgunt Zassenhaus	Zion German Language School
18-Oct-20	H.L. Mencken	
19-Oct-20	William Donald Schaefer	Deutsches Haus
20-Oct-20	John & Elias Barnitz	
21-Oct-20	William Hoffman	Hager House
22-Oct-20	Schmidt Bakery	
23-Oct-20	J. Maxwell Miller	Deutsche Correspondent
24-Oct-20	Charles Schneidereith	
25-Oct-20	Brantz Mayer	
26-Oct-20	Gustav Brunn	German Orphanage
27-Oct-20	Carrie May ‘Kurrelmeyer’ Zintl	
28-Oct-20	Max Brödel	German Aged Home
29-Oct-20	William Knabe	
30-Oct-20	John Tjarks	Zion Church
31-Oct-20	Club Promotions w. contacts	

**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 Lynette Dean at [german@germansociety-md.com](mailto:german@germansociety-md.com)**

**This action alone saves paper and postage costs.**

**You may then print the Vereinsnachrichten in full color.**

## *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

## *Watch for your Dues Bill!*

Dues billings will be sent on December 1, 2020 and are due on January 1, 2021. The Membership clause in our bylaws state: Membership dues shall be in an amount as recommended from time to time by the Executive Committee and approved by the Board of Directors (currently \$25.00). Such dues shall be used to pay the general administrative expenses of the operations of the Society and any income in excess of such expenses shall be used as determined by the Board of Directors. Dues are payable by January 1 of each membership year. Life membership dues shall be established by the Board of Directors (currently \$250.00).

The dues remains at \$25.00 and your spouse may be added at no additional charge. Those members who are in arrears, but wish to remain a member, please make every effort to pay your annual dues. The dues is a mere 7 cents

per day.

You may pay anytime by either mailing your dues renewal funds to: German Society of Maryland, 2300 York Road, Suite 209; Timonium, Maryland 21093. You may also pay via paypal or Zelle. Our paypal link is on our website at <https://www.germansociety-md.com/contact.htm>.

Your \$25.00 is used to help the German Society continue its mission. Keep in mind that additional funds may be included and earmarked for the newsletter fund, the heritage fund or the education fund.

During this difficult time, please know that if you are experiencing financial difficulty and are unable to pay your dues, but wish to remain one of our valuable members, please call and speak to one of our officers.

*Continued from page –8-*  
picnics, and other meetings during each year.

When Shelley, our current president asked me what I would do with the little extra time that my retiring will afford me, my thoughts were wandering back to what has been. Building bridges and connecting to people, creating community and practicing awareness were important to me. I am thankful for the trust and friendship extended to me by the presidents and board members during the almost 20 years of working with them and now it is time to hand over the task to Lynette Dean, who has been involved and worked many years for the GSM. Saying "good bye" is not easy but in every NO there is a YES, which might mean for me to keep my computer handy for how else can I stay in touch with seven grandchildren living abroad and travel being restricted through COVID 19?

God bless you all!



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Kraig Dean-1st VP  
Zachary Butt-2nd VP  
Shirley Santora-Secretary  
Anton Smoot-Treasurer

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Kraig Dean  
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William Kommalan  
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President- Women's Auxiliary  
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\* = past president

#### OFFICE MANAGER

Bärbel Otto/Lynette Dean

*Past newsletters are posted on our website, [www.germansociety-md.com](http://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](http://www.md-germans.org) or [www.GermanMarylanders.org](http://www.GermanMarylanders.org).*

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*Please submit articles or items of interest to  
Shelley Arnold, Editor at [bsarnold7@gmail.com](mailto:bsarnold7@gmail.com)*

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Dr. Maureen Helinski,  
Webmaster



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