

# THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND

DIE DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT VON MARYLAND

## VEREINSNACHRICHTEN

AUGUST, 1998

Volume 1, Issue 17

### DR. ARMIN MRUCK TO BE HONORED AT BANQUET NOV. 6

The 215th annual banquet of the Society is set for Nov. 6 at Martin's West. Dr. Armin Mruck, a professor for many years at Towson State University and a long-standing member of our Society, will be our honoree. Dr. Mruck will spend the fall semester in Germany in a student exchange program which he initiated while on the Towson staff, but will return to Maryland for this event. Last year Dr. Mruck was honored by the Federal Republic of Germany for his many contributions to German-American unity.

Each year the Society honors a Marylander of German ancestry who has made a substantial contribution to our state or nation in the fields of art, science, religion, industry, politics, business, education, medicine, or other professions.

### JOHN AYMOLD NEW PRESIDENT

The Board of Directors, elected long-time director John Aymold as the Society's new president. He succeeds Michael J. Nieberding, who held the office for two years. Mr. Aymold has held major committee assignments in recent years: executive committee, scholarship, nominating, the summer festival and awards banquet committees. He is thoroughly familiar with the Society's activities and inner workings.

***"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."***

### GERMAN SOCIETY TO SPONSOR FESTIVAL EXHIBIT AUG. 14-16

The annual German Festival is again set in Carroll Park, sponsored by the Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein, of which the German Society is a member. It runs from noon on Friday, Aug. 14 - Sunday evening, Aug. 16.

This year the German Society will display the "Agart" exhibits, featuring German-American contributions to agriculture. The exhibit was assembled by the German Embassy and the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture. The Society will also present the first of its own new exhibits of accomplishments of Marylanders of German origin, such as Schmidt's bakery, Haussner's restaurant, Blob's Park, Eichenkranz restaurant, Egon Bingert's meat packing business, Goetze's Candy and others. The Society has obtained a 900 sq. ft. tent for the displays.

The Agart exhibit contains about 50 panels featuring products of well known firms founded by German-Americans, such as Oscar Meyer, Heinz, Augustus Busch (Budweiser beer), and many others.

#### THOMAS JEFFERSON - GERMAN CONNECTION

A highlight of the exhibit portrays the German travels of Thomas Jefferson through the wine regions, during which he collected and brought to the USA many strains of German grape vines.

We need volunteers to staff our tent and distribute informational materials about our Society. If you can devote a few hours at any time during the event, please call Harry Gruel (410-922-5906) to volunteer.

# UPCOMING Events Calendar

## THE ANNUAL ECUMENICAL SERVICE

The 10th annual German ecumenical service will be held on Thanksgiving Eve at Zion Church, City Hall Plaza. Jim Gay who served as chairman at last year's record turnout, is returning again as chairman. Pastor H. J. Siegfried Otto, who has been most supportive of the event from its outset, will serve as master of ceremonies.

Participating will be the Maryland Boys Choir, trumpeters from the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, children from the Zion German language school and representatives of many Maryland German groups.

The ecumenical service was first organized by then-President Donald Tillman in 1989 immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The purpose was and is to give thanks for the freedom, particularly freedom of religion, for all German peoples, resulting from the fall of communism.

## DIRECTORS RE-ELECTED

At the meeting of members on March 20, the following directors were re-elected to a new three-year term: Ronald Antlitz, CPA, Harry Gruel, Mark Potthast, Irma Tillman and Edwin O. Wenck, Esq.

## CHARTER AMENDED FIRST THE FIRST TIME IN 181 YEARS

At the annual meeting of the members of the Society, the corporate charter which was granted in 1817 to the Society by an act of the General Assembly of Maryland, was amended. The original charter contained a provision which limited the amount of funds which could be accumulated by the Society to \$5,000.00. The Society lost sight of this provision and ignored it until one of the directors, reading the charter, brought it to the attention of the Board. The treasurer, Ronald Antlitz, CPA, reported at the annual meeting that the treasury now has over \$675,000.

## VEREINS KALENDAR

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|           |                                     |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| Aug 14-17 | German Festival at Carroll Park     |
| Oct. ?    | Oktoberfest at 5th Regiment Armory  |
| Nov. 6    | German Society Awards Banquet       |
| Nov. 25   | Thanksgiving Eve ecumenical service |

## THE 1998 ANNUAL PICNIC

The picnic, held this year in early May at the Centennial Lake in Howard County, was a resounding success. President Mike Nieberding, his father, brother and uncles did the cooking, the set-up and handling the beer and sodas made the German potato salad and with the advice of Irma Tillman, cooked her sweet sauerkraut. There was an abundance of wurst (weiss, bratwurst, bauern und knock). Bob Fritzke led in the singing of Schnitzelbank, followed by Edelweiss and a repertory of German folk songs.

The weather was perfect and the food, beer, wine and music put the crowd in a holiday mood. 140 members and friends were in attendance, the youngest being 9-month old Ben Potthast, son of our director, Mark.

## DINE WITH EDELWEISS CLUB

Members of the German Society are invited to attend events sponsored by the Edelweiss Club. It has inaugurated a series of dinners and lunches for restaurants sponsoring its Radio Hour. Call Betty Niemann (410-668-2863) for information.

## GENEALOGY SOCIETY MEETING

The Mid Atlantic Germanic Society held its spring meeting at Blob's Park, Jessup, MD. in May. The Society was founded to encourage and emphasize genealogical research of German speaking ancestors who settled in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States, and to exchange information pertinent to such research. Its meetings are open to non-members. For information, call Joan Sheviak: 703-560-7144.

## MEMBERSHIP REACHES 860

Recent gains have brought the Society's membership to an all-time high of 860. The Society set a target of reaching 1,000 members by Jan. 1, 2000 and expects to reach that goal. Please continue to tell your friends about the Society and invite them to join. An application form is always included in the newsletter. Call the office and our office manager will mail you applications and fliers describing the Society.

## KLAUS WUST LECTURES TO THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

At the annual meeting of the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland Klaus Wust, a former editor of the Washington Journal and for 30 years the editor of the Historical Society's scholarly journal, "The Report". Mr. Wust presented a paper on the role of the Hessians during the Revolutionary War. Many captured Hessians were interned in Frederick, MD. His interesting paper will be published in a later issue of The Report. Klaus Wust is also the author of the booklet "Pioneers in Service", a history of the German Society of Maryland.

## BANDLEADER COLLECTS GERMAN SPIKED HELMETS

George Barndorf, bandleader of The Impacts (which played at our Awards Banquet) collects German Imperial "Rick Hops" -- the spiked helmets used by the German armies between 1870 and 1916. Troops from each section of Germany had their distinct helmets which identified them as being from their geographic place of origin. They were made of leather. If stored in basements, the mould ruins them; and if stored in attics, the dry heat turns them to powder. Since Prussia had the largest army, Prussian helmets are the most common. The rarest are off Lippe-Detmold.

Officers' helmets were more highly decorated and are more valuable than those of the enlisted men. The most common enlisted men's helmets are now bring \$250 - \$500, while officers' helmets start around \$800.

## MARYLANDER IS PUBLISHER OF THE "GERMAN LIFE" MAGAZINE

Cumberland MD's Lisa Fitzpatrick founded "German Life" magazine three years ago and made a success from the niche she chose in the publishing field. After graduating from the University of MD, Baltimore County, Fitzpatrick looked for a publication which would speak to the German side of her heritage and found none. Since Germans are the largest ethnic group in the USA and a million Americans travel to Germany each year, she launched a 64 page magazine directed to this group. She now has a 45,000 circulation base. Fitzpatrick has German and Irish roots. Her mother's parents emigrated from Germany and settled in Garrett County. She studied statistics and mathematics at UMBC.

## BEER STUBE RAZED

The Peabody Bookstore and Beer Stube at 913 N. Charles Street is yet another Baltimore German landmark torn down. Siegfried Weisberger immigrated from Austria and began the bookstore in 1933. He built a Viennese Brauhaus at the rear of his shop, making it the first bookstore in America with its own Bierstube. Here H. L. Mencken played ragtime piano in the European cafe where people could drink a beer after browsing among the books. Weisberger was a Mencken pallbearer.

## GERALD KAINZ HONORED

The United German American Congress (UGAC/USA) named Gerald Kainz as it's German American man of the year at a Nov. 1st "Council of 1,000" Banquet in the Banquet Hall of the Medical Research Center, Bethesda, MD. Mr. Kainz is the publisher of the Washington Journal, a German language news weekly, having a wide national distribution and a broad following in Maryland. Mr. Kainz regularly attends the German Society's annual awards banquet and is a close friend of the Society and of many MD German organizations.

## JAPANESE STUDY GERMAN

68% of all Japanese students study German, a language rarely taught in the American public schools.

## SCHOOL CELEBRATES 150 YEARS

The Institute of Notre Dame, a Catholic girls high school located on Aisquith Street in Baltimore City, is celebrating the 150th anniversary of its establishment. The school was founded by a German nun, Karolina Gerhardinger, during a visit to America, in 1847, with the help of Father John Neumann. Karolina received a certification as a "royal teacher" in the Kings's School in Stadtamhof in 1812 and taught until 1833 when she became a nun and founded the School Sisters of Notre Dame (Der Kongregation der armen Schulschwestern von unserer lieben Frau). She became known as Mother Theresa Gerhardinger. Her reputation for holiness resulted in the Roman Catholic Church initiating the process of her canonization and she has been designated as "Blessed." Helping her to set up the school was Father John N. Neumann, a missionary priest to German-speaking America. He was a pastor of St. Alphonsus Church at Saratoga St. and Park Avenue in Baltimore, at St. Augustine's in Elkridge and St. Mary's in Cumberland. He later became bishop of Philadelphia and was declared to be a saint by Pope Paul VI.

## GERMAN FIRMS MOVE TO MD.

**Ulla Popken** has taken over the former Grumman aircraft warehouse in Glen Arm, MD. Popken, a retailer of large-size women's clothing and operates 230 stores in Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium. Popken's U.S. president is 30-year old Thomas Schneider. The firm is named after his mother-in-law. **Altenloh, Brink & Co.**, a German firm which makes screws and bolts, is preparing to set up business in Savage, Maryland. The firm will initially import product from Germany, but plans later to manufacture screws and bolts in MD.

**Bertelsmann AG**, a German media giant, has bought Random House, the USA's largest book publisher. Through the purchase of Random House, Bertelsmann will acquire a distribution center in Westminster, MD which is as large as 10 football fields.

Bertelsmann, which already has rights to authors such as John Gresham, will receive the services of Michael Crichton, Norman Mailer and John Updike.

## HISTORY OF GERMAN-AMERICANS IN THE WORLD WARS PUBLISHED

Dr. Don Heinrich Tolzmann, a professor at the University of Cincinnati, has edited a documentary history of the German-Americans in the World Wars. In both wars, German-Americans became objects of anti-German hysteria. In WWI, the German language was banned in 26 states; Germans were lynched, dismissed from their jobs and persecuted in all imaginable ways, including internment by the thousands.

## OTTERBEIN FAMILY REUNION

The Otterbein family held its annual reunion last month in Baltimore County. The family traces its ancestry to 17th century Bad Salzsclirff, Germany. The "Baltimore" Otterbeins are descended from Adam Otterbein who emigrated to the U.S. in the 1870's. They are joined by a large Otterbein contingent from Williamsport PA. Dr. Leo Otterbein of Lutherville was instrumental in arranging for the local event.

## 40,000 STUDENTS MARCH ON BONN

Protesting against the German university system, students from all over the country took their grievances to Bonn. They complained of crowded lecture halls, libraries without books, scarcity of computers and especially the suggestion that the schools charge tuition. Germany's 240 universities charge no tuition. The system was built to handle 950,000 students, but the number has risen to 1.8 million, many of them spending much longer than is usual in the United States to complete their studies. Some stay until their late 20's and early 30's.

## PUBLICATION FUNDS

The Society of The History of the Germans in MD has collected more than \$20,000.00 in its drive to establish a trust fund to ensure future publication of its 103-year-old "Report." The "Historical" Society is a "sister" of The German Society.

## MEMBER NEWS

## MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

**Sister Benedicta Viebeck, SSND**, celebrated her 60th jubilee as a member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. She is a native of Bavaria where she entered the convent. She obtained her teacher's license in Germany and subsequently came to America where she obtained her master's degree and served in many assignments, including the executive council of the congregation. Today she is actively engaged in translating SSND's American archives (originally maintained in German) into English.

**William Donald Schaefer**, is back in politics. Don Schaefer, a long-time member of the German Society and the honoree at our 1984 awards banquet, has come out of retirement to seek the position of State Comptroller, vacated by the death of our beloved member, Louis Goldstein. Don returns to active political life at age 76, after having served for 16 years as president of the city council and Mayor of Baltimore; and 8 years as Governor of Maryland. The role of comptroller is one of the three highest elective offices in the state, together with the position of governor and of attorney general.

**Monsignor Martin Schwalenberg** was featured in a full page article in the sports section of the Baltimore Sun for his role as chaplain to the Baltimore Orioles. "Father Marty" was himself an outstanding college pitcher before entering the seminary.

Baltimore County Executive **Dutch Ruppertsberger** was prodded to run for governor of Maryland in November, but decided to run for re-election in the County. He is expected to win easily.

**Hon. Cornelius F. Sybert, Jr.**, rendered a decision in the highly publicized case of Eagan vs. Calhoun, in which minor children sued their father for the death of their

mother. John Calhoun was found guilty of homicide in the death of his wife. The children, through a guardian, sued the father for damages. Judge Sybert ruled for the children. The case was appealed to the highest court of Maryland which agreed with Judge Sybert. Judge Sybert recently retired from a long and distinguished judicial career in the Circuit Court for Howard County. He hails from a line of legal experts, his father having served as Attorney General of Maryland and Chief Justice of our Court of Appeals.

**Judge John F. Fader, II** this year will complete 15 years of service on the Circuit Court for Baltimore County, having previously served on its District Court for 5 years. He is an expert in family law, a subject which he teaches at the University of Baltimore Law School. Judge Fader and his running mate, Judge William Hinkel, have no opposition in the November election. Both Judges and their wives attended our most recent annual awards banquet.

**Ronbert L. Ehrlich**, the German Society honoree at its 1997 Awards Banquet, is seen as Maryland GOP's 'Rising Star'. He is the congressman for MD's second district and a long-time member of the German Society.

He arrived at the Society Awards Banquet in work clothes, apologizing that he had come directly from the floor of congress to attend the event. In his acceptance speech he related his German heritage and how proud he was of it. Gudrun Lucke-Hogaust, cultural director at the German Embassy, presented him with a book of German history, for which he was most grateful.

Ehrlich, 40, is a two-term member of the House and there are rumors that he may challenge four-term Democratic Senator Paul Sarbanes in the election of 2,000.

## **DOROTHY GALWAY**

A former officer and director of the Society and our office secretary, Dorothy Galway died after a long bout with cancer on July 15, 1998 in Arlington, Texas, where she had been living with her daughter, Denise Keller. After she retired from the First National Bank of Maryland, she worked in the office of Zion Church and later served 10 years as secretary of the German Society. Dorothy was born in Germany and emigrated to the USA as a "war bride" and lived in Baltimore for most of her life. She worked as executive secretary to the president of First National Bank and was well known in the banking community. After her move to Texas, she remained in touch by letter and phone with many of the Society's members and other friends in Maryland. She was an expert in deciphering the German handwriting-script and was happy to translate old letters and modern correspondence for all who approached her. In all of her relations and work for the Society, she was efficient, kind and generous and was deeply loved by all who knew and worked with her. Even after moving to Texas, Dorothy returned to Baltimore to help with the move to the Mt. Vernon offices of the Society. Dorothy was a devoted member of Zion Church. She would often discuss theological and spiritual matters and was admired and respected as a saintly woman. The Board of Directors of the Society voted to make a gift of \$500 to the Zion German language school in memory of her special contribution to the Society.

## **LOUIS L. GOLDSTEIN**

A member of the Society and our 1995 Honoree, "Louie" died July 3, 1998. He was honored by the Society as a Marylander of German descent who has made a significant contribution to our state or nation. At the time of his death at age 85, he was campaigning for re-election for an 11th term as Comptroller of Maryland, one of the three highest elective offices in the State government.

Louie held public office since 1938, except for the war years when he enlisted as a private in the marines and was discharged as a captain. Before his 39 years as Comptroller, he served as president of the State senate and was a member of the house of delegates. Without doubt, he was the most popular politician in Maryland and was known and loved by all. In recent years he traveled to work on a highway named for him to work in the Annapolis office building which also bore his name. His body lay in state in the Maryland State House, an honor bestowed on no other person in the history of Maryland. A diplomat to the end, his funeral services were conducted both in a synagogue and in a Methodist church.

## **WILLIAM SCHOENEMANN.**

Bill actively participated with his wife Rose in the activities of the Society until he was struck by cancer. He was also active in the Edelweiss Club, which he served as a board member and treasurer.

## **EDGAR F. LASSAHAN, SR.**

died on November 16, 1997 at his Bowlelys Quarters home at age 82. Edgar was the third generation owner of a northeast Baltimore funeral home where he worked since he was a teen-ager. Edgar took over the business when his father, Henry, died in 1946 and himself retired in 1976. His son, Edgar F. Lassahan, Jr., now operates the business. He is survived by his wife of 61 years, the former M. Eleonora Albrecht, 2 children, 5 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren. When he was able, Mr. Lassahan never failed to attend the Society's annual banquet and dance.

The Society is sad to learn of the death of our long-time members, **ROBERT GLECKLER** and **RUTH MANGELS EPPLER.**

The members of the Society are requested to advise our office of any other members who have died so that we can publish their names in our newsletter.

## MISCELLANEOUS: ITEMS OF INTEREST

### 134 ATTEND ANNUAL MEETING

A record number of members attended the annual meeting of the Society, despite heavy rain and chilling weather. Rev. Dr. Eric Gritch opened the meeting with prayers in English and German. President Nieberding outlined the activities of the past year.

Mr. Nieberding also reported that the Society honored General John Stricker, one of our founders, by making a \$5,000 contribution toward the renovation of Baltimore's Battle Monument. Stricker was the prime mover and major contributor for the the monument in 1817, the first monument in the United States, commemorating the 1814 defeat of the British in the Battle of Baltimore.

Committee reports were presented by Robert Gay (Ecumenical service), Ted Potthast (Awards Banquet), and Clement Ehrhardt, Jr. (Education committee).

The members gave an ovation to Dr. Armin Mruck for the academic medal of honor presented to him by the President of Germany for his many years of work in fostering university student exchanges between America and Germany.

### KARNEVAL BALL

A Karneval Ball was held the Saturday before Lent in the Adlersaal sponsored by The Zion Forum of German Culture. The "costume or black tie" affair was well attended by a cross-section of the German-Americans of the Metropolitan Baltimore area. It is similar to the mardi gras. Karneval time begins on 11.11.11 (Nov. 11th at 11 o'clock), but does not get into full swing until late January. Karneval traces its history to the religious observation of abstaining from meat during Lent, the Latin words "carne vale" meaning "farewell to meat".

### GERMAN AMERICA ON THE WEB

Check the web page of the Max Kade German-American Center at Indiana Univ/Purdue Univ., Indianapolis: <http://www-lib.iupui.edu/kade/>

### COLOGNE CATHEDRAL JUBILEE

The City of Cologne (Köln) is celebrating the 750th anniversary of its famous "Dom", with festivities peaking between August 8 - 23. The cornerstone was laid on August 14, 1248. The Cathedral is the tallest church in the world, its twin towers over 515 feet high. On August 15 the church and the city will feature anniversary festivities and celebrations.

### HILDEGARD VON BINGEN, 1098 - 1179

1998 marks 900 years from the birth of Hildegard von Bingen, a German nun who was a composer, writer and religious scholar. Her style is being copied by modern composers; CD's containing her music can now be found in music stores and even in chains such as Caldor and Walmart. In 1150 she moved to a convent in Bingen on the Rhine, a town west of Mainz, a town established by the Romans in 11 B.C. She is often referred to as Saint Hildegard. Her travels took her too Köln, Bamberg, Trier, and to Ingelheim where she met with Emperor Frederick.

### 150th ANNIVERSARY OF THE 48-ERS

A revolution occurred in Germany from March, 1848 through 1849. It failed and many of its leaders were executed. It triggered a flood of emigration, mostly to America. Earlier emigrants left for religious and economic reasons, but the new wave fled for political reasons and consisted of many highly educated people. In America they took interest in political events. They wrote books and founded numerous newspapers and journals. When the revolution of 1848-49 failed, the feudal order returned and thus began an exodus of Germans who would not accept that life and took the boat to America. Baltimore's Locust Point was a major destination.

Carl Schurz (1829-1906) is the best known of the 48-ers. He supported Lincoln and was named Ambassador to Spain; then became a general, commanding Union troops in the Civil War; was elected U. S. Senator from Missouri in 1869 and in 1877 was named Secretary of the Interior. The main hall in the German Embassy in D.C. is named for him.

FOUNDED 1783



# The German Society of Maryland

OFFICE OF THE SOCIETY

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## DAS DEUTSCHE HAUS -- NEW YORK

Germany's foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel, was on hand for the dedication of a new 23-story office building at 871 U. N. Plaza, New York, on June 10, 1998. The building provides offices for the German delegation to the U.N., the General Consulate and the German Information Center. It houses a library, auditorium and an art gallery. It is a "piece of Germany" in the middle of New York.

## NEW MEMBERS

New members will be listed in the next issue of the newsletter. We urge our new members to take an active role. At present we have a strong need for help in Maryland historical research, writing and preparing exhibits on contributions of persons of German origin to MD.

## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ . Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Annual dues \$15. Spouse may be included at no extra cost. Make check payable to "The German Society of MD" P. O. Box 22585, Baltimore, MD 21203-4585

This newsletter is published by The German Society of Maryland, an organization founded in 1783 and incorporated in 1817 by Act of the General Assembly of Maryland. It is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation pursuant to the provisions of §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Society is a member of Der Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von Maryland, D.A.N.K (German-American National Congress), The United German-American Committee of the USA, Inc. and other civic groups which promote German-American culture and heritage. Members and friends are encouraged to submit items of interest to Theodore J. Potthast, Jr., Editor, at 1819 Leadburn Rd. Towson, MD 21204-1830.

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