

JUNE, 1994

VOLUME ONE -ISSUE TWO

**SOCIETY'S PURPOSE IS RESTATED  
AT HISTORIC MEETING**

A special meeting of the members was called on May 7, 1994 for the purpose of redefining the purpose and goals of the Society. It was the second of two special meetings, the first held on February 26th. When the Society was founded in 1783 and incorporated in 1817, the organization was focused on confronting the ills of those times, i.e. the abuses suffered by German-speaking immigrants. The Society functioned for nearly two hundred years as a social welfare agency. Those functions had been taken over by governmental agencies, and in 1957, the Society concentrated on developing a college scholarship program. Our Directors established a fund of approximately \$180,000 to deal with scholarships, and believed that the Society needed to expand its horizons.

Thus, the special "constitutional convention" meetings of Feb. 26 and May 7, which culminated on redefining the purpose of the Society as follows:

***"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."***

The members instructed the Board of Directors to use this "stated purpose" as its guideline in developing new programs and policies.

**TWO CHARGED WITH  
MURDER OF DR.  
MCCLAIN**

Keith Curtis, 26, of Waverly and Andre Davis, 21, of Yolando Rd. were charged with homicide in the death of our long-time member, William H. McClain. He was attacked on the porch of his home, and the force of the blow caused him to fall backward, his head striking the concrete porch floor. His death was ruled a homicide because it related to injuries received in the course of a felony.

Professor McClain taught German literature at Johns Hopkins University from 1953 to 1982 and was chairman of the German department for 10 years. He was a member of the German Society of Maryland for more than 30 years.

**GOTCHA!!! NACH, NICHT  
NACHT**

Our first issue of this newsletter carried the title "Vereinsnachrichten." A misplaced "t" changes "Nachrichten" i.e., "news" to a night-time event, as in "Stille Nacht," (i.e., "Silent Night.")

We circulated 600 copies of the newsletter and only two of our readers chided us for the error: Edith Kellner of the Women's Auxiliary, and Sister Benedicta Vieback, SSND a retired German teacher residing at Notre Dame Prep School.

We received a letter of congratulations from a gentle reader, Dr. Ursula Lammers in Bad Neuenahr Ahrweiler, Germany, who said she enjoyed our (correctly spelled) "Vereinsnachrichten."

# SUMMER Calendar of Events



## German Society Picnic Saturday, August 7



**RAIN OR SHINE!**

Chairpersons Roland and Lorraine Brockmeyer announce that a tent has been ordered so the picnic will proceed in fair or foul weather on the

Brockmeyer lawn. German beer, wurst, and music will guarantee gemütlichkeit.

Directions and details will be mailed to the membership in early July. Plan to make early reservations, since tickets will be limited.



## Edelweiss Club and Baltimore Kickers Host Crab Feasts

**JULY 24-** The Edelweiss Club is sponsoring a crab feast on Sunday, July 24th from 1 pm to 5 pm at the Baltimore Kicker's Clubhouse, 26 South Broadway. The cost is \$20 per person and includes all you can eat steamed crabs and a variety of food and drinks. For tickets and further information, contact Walt Doepke at 828-8415.

**JULY 10 and AUGUST 14** The Baltimore Kickers is having two crab feasts. For details contact Esther Scheffel at 719-0278.



## German Festival at Carroll Park August 19-21

Maryland boasts the oldest continuous German festival in America— 94 consecutive years. It remains at Carroll Park, Washington Boulevard and Monroe Street in Southwest Baltimore. Admission is \$2.00. All types of German food, baked goods, desserts, beer and wine will be served. German-American clubs will maintain cultural booths. Souvenirs from Germany will also be sold. Between 30,000 and 40,000 visitors are expected.

In the past, visitors have come all the way from Germany for the event. Honor guards in the dress of colonial German soldiers are coming from Philadelphia for the festival opening.

## ETHNIC FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

- JUNE 16-** German day at Hopkins Plaza.
- JUNE 17-19-** Polish festival at Patterson Park.
- JULY 23-24:** Ukrainian Festival at Patterson Park.
- JULY 29-31:** Italian Festival at Patterson Park.
- AUGUST 19-21:** German Festival at Carroll Park
- SEPTEMBER 11:** German Festival in Holmdel, New Jersey.
- OCTOBER 1:** German Festival at Freedom Plaza, D.C.

# WE NEED YOUR HELP!



## RESEARCHERS AND AUTHORS NEEDED Heritage Committee Plans Leaflets on Maryland Germans

The Heritage and Culture Committee plans to prepare and distribute leaflets about contributions to life in Maryland by persons of Germanic ancestry.

This is an original project which will require research into the lives of the subjects. We need volunteers. Members can pick a topic and submit it for committee approval, or just ask to be assigned to research and write about a subject.

The concept involves sketches of persons in various walks of life who have impacted upon Maryland. There will be a series for Politics, Business, Military, the Judiciary, Medicine, Religion, Banking, Law, Science, Building, Engineering, Education and any other appropriate category.

For example, under "politics" would be included Mayor Broening, Governor McKeldin; under "Clergy" Pastor Julius Hoffman and Father Joseph Sellinger, S.J.; under "Judiciary" Judge Brune, Judge Stein; under "military" General John Stricker and Major General Baron de Kalb.

Members are requested to call the office or send a note to make suggestions or to volunteer to do research and writing.

## GERMAN FESTIVAL AUGUST 19-21 WE NEED YOUR HELP!



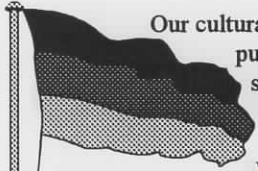
The German Society will sponsor a cultural booth and a refreshment stand at the festival. It will be held on August 19, 20 and 21 at Carroll Park in Baltimore City. The festival is conducted by the

Deutscheramerikanischer Bürgerverein von Maryland, of which our Society is a member. The festival runs from 4-10 PM on Friday and noon to 10 PM on Saturday and Sunday.

Please sign up to help. No experience needed. To volunteer, call Harry Gruel (our festival chairman) at 922-5906.



## HELP NEEDED AT CULTURAL BOOTH



Our cultural booth at the German Festival, Aug. 19-21 will be twice the size as last year, to accommodate the demand by the public for help and information in areas of education, heritage, art and travel. The Society is seeking volunteers to sign up to work the booth in stints of one to three hour stretches. The German government has given us a fine assortment of brochures for distribution at the festival.

We have prepared a package of literature to mail in advance to our volunteers to help them study to deal with typical inquiries from festival visitors. The theme of this year's festival places emphasis on art, music, genealogy, literature and education, and less on the travel features of past festivals.

Please volunteer to help at the cultural booth. Call our festival chairman, Harry Gruel at 922-5906; or Dorothy Galway, our office secretary, at 685-0450; or send your name to Harry at the following address:

Harry Gruel, Festival Chairman  
3617 Clifmar Road  
Baltimore, Maryland 21244

## THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY REPORT

Margarete Kramer, president of the Auxiliary, reported that the past year has been filled with activities. The German language was used in all of the meetings. Some members visited Germany, including the former D.D.R. and presented reports of their trips.

April, the founding month of the society, was celebrated by a festive collation and appropriate recitations and singing. During the well-attended monthly meetings, members furnished entertainment and interesting reports. At each meeting the members cultivated German folk songs by singing together.

The Auxiliary sponsored a 3-day vacation to the Pocono Mountains. A Christmas celebration was held together with the Ladies' Aid. Several charitable donations were made during the course of the year.

Women who are interested in the Auxiliary's activities, including monthly meetings, which present the opportunity to converse in German, should call Dorothy Galway at the office of the German Society (410-685-0450)

## ATTENDANCE AT MAY 7 CONVENTION



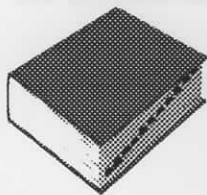
Twenty five members of the Society attended the May 7 special meeting at the Towson Elks Lodge.

Awalt, Jane	Mruck, Prof. Armand
Awalt, Robert	Nickel, Klaus
Branning, Mary	Potthast, Theodore
Bricker, Hon. William	Praumschufer, Frank Jr.
Brooke, Dandridge	Sommerwerck, Robert
Davisch, Dr. David	Sturgill, Jack
Galway, Dorothy	Ware, Ingrid
Gruel, Betty	Ware, Barney
Gruel, Harry	Wastler, Leo
Hibschman, Prof. Carola	White, William
Hinkal, Stanford	Wittstadt, Mark
Kammerer, Don	Wittstadt, Gerard
Hon Metzger, John A.	

A large number of members, unable to attend, made their ideas known by submitting written memoranda and by phoning their concerns in advance.



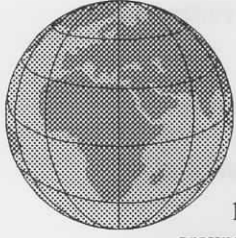
## PERIODICALS AVAILABLE IN GERMAN



One of our readers, Ralph Murphy, enjoys reading magazines and newspapers in German. He writes that he found a source of publications in the German language, in the fields of art, autos, aviation, finance, fashion, sports, etc. Ralph has passed on to us the name of the distributor whom he has found to have an fine selection of German language reading materials: German Language Publications, Inc., P. O. Box 9868, Englewood, N.J. 07631-1138.

## CULTURAL CENTER & MUSEUM STUDIED

The United German-American Committee of the USA, Inc., (UGAC-USA) a national organization headquartered in Rockledge, PA (near Philadelphia) is studying the prospect of establishing a national cultural center and museum.



"Is there any reason why America's largest ethnic group, the German-Americans, lack a national German-American Heritage Museum, when almost every other ethnic group has established such a museum to highlight and illuminate the history and heritage of their respective ethnic groups?" asks Dr. Don Heinrich Holzmann,

Director of the German-American Studies Program of the University of Cincinnati. Dr. Holzmann is the midwest regional director of UGAC-USA.

UCAG will consult with officials of various cities to determine the best place for such a facility. Those with suggestions for the project are encouraged to submit them to Marlene Stocks, Executive Director at UGAC-USA's office, 515 Huntingdon Pike, Rockledge, PA 19046-1722.

## SOCIETY JOINS DANK

The German Society has applied for membership in the German American National Congress, with the abbreviation derived from the German spelling: Deutsch Amerikanischer National Kongress. It promotes German culture and heritage, language schools for children and authentic festivals. It publishes a monthly Journal containing information of activities of German-Americans nationwide, and carries many articles on German culture, customs, folklore, and literature. DANK is headquartered in Chicago.

## HARTGE FAMILY REUNION

The Hartge family reunion will be held June 18-19 in West River, near Annapolis, to honor their ancestor, Henry Hartge. Henry Hartge emigrated to Maryland from Germany in the late 1700s and worked for the Knabe piano company in Baltimore.

Any Hartge relatives wishing to attend should contact Toch Hartge, 6523 Locust Grove, Easton, Maryland 21601 (telephone 410-819-0669). Nearly 300 relatives are expected to attend.



## JUDGE WITTSTADT HONORED

Our vice-president, Gerard Wm. Wittstadt, was the subject of a feature article in last month's issue of The

German-American Journal, a national publication for Americans of German Heritage, published in Chicago.

The lengthy article emphasized Judge Wittstadt's long Maryland heritage. It also reported the fact that he is a direct descendant of Baron deKalb, appointed a Major General by the Continental Congress. He was designated the Commanding General of the Army of the South by George Washington and died while leading the Maryland and Delaware troops in the Battle of Camden, in South Carolina.

Judge Wittstadt will deliver Proclamations by Governor Schaeffer and by the German American National Congress to General deKalb's erstwhile home in Hutendorf, Bavaria to be displayed in the deKalb museum there.

## SCHMEISSNER CITES NEED FOR COMMUNICATION

Dr. Volker Schmeissner, in his address to the annual meeting of the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland, cited the dire need for communicating local and national events of interest to persons of German ancestry.

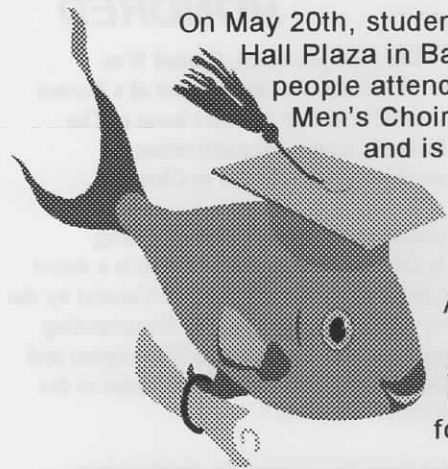
As a classic example, he pointed out that the Maryland community, consisting of two million people of German descent, simply did not get the message about the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the first Germans immigrating to America. The attendance at the celebration was exceedingly low.

He stated that neither do they pay much attention to the annual German-American Day festivities.

The German Society, at its special meeting on May 7th, resolved to devote more energies to the promotion of German heritage, which will include helping to publicize such German-American activities.



# The German Society Presents Student Awards



On May 20th, students, their families and teachers met at Zion Church's Adlersaal on City Hall Plaza in Baltimore for the awards ceremony for students of German. More than 300 people attended the presentation, which included a performance by the Wittendorf Men's Choir. The choir came to Baltimore from the Black Forest town of Wittendorf, and is celebrating the choir's 75th anniversary.

The German Society honored students from Maryland schools for excellence in the study of the German language, and for achieving examination scores in the 90th percentile in the test of the National Association of Teachers of German.

As an encouragement to the students, the Society awarded a check for \$100 to each of them, and enrolled them as members of the Society for the forthcoming year.

At the same time, some of the students also received the Distinguished Achievement Award in German from the United German-American Committee of the USA, Inc. (UDAC-USA), a national organization with headquarters in the Philadelphia area.

Mike Nieberding, chairman of our High School Awards Committee, presented the awards, with the help of Maureen Helinski.

**Student**

**School**

**Teacher**

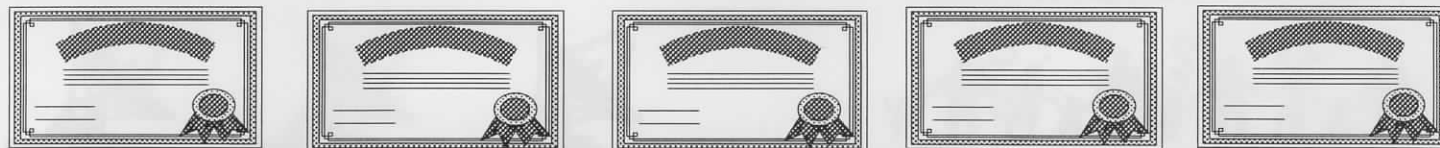
Catherine Pawlowski  
 Nadra Wass  
 Michael Feschetti  
 Devin Swaney  
 Justin Rice  
 Harold Yun  
 Erin Kelleher  
 Catherine Heimerl  
 Kathryn Lannon  
 Dominic Co  
 Asta Almenas  
 Arwen Centa  
 Dan Roitman  
 Carina Lundgren  
 Jessica Krick  
 Katherine Tyson  
 Gillett Pionowski  
 Daniel Shimko

Rockville High School  
 North County High  
 Georgetown Prep  
 Georgetown Prep  
 Georgetown Prep  
 Georgetown Prep  
 John Carroll School  
 John Carroll School  
 John Carroll School  
 Loyola High School  
 Eleanor Roosevelt H. S.  
 Eleanor Roosevelt H. S.  
 Eleanor Roosevelt H. S.  
 Walter Johnson High  
 Baltimore City College  
 McDonough School  
 High Point High School  
 Chesapeake High School

William Zolar  
 Maureen Helinski\*  
 Marialuise Collins  
 Marialuise Collins  
 Marialuise Collins  
 Marialuise Collins  
 Marialuise Collins  
 Judy Potter  
 Judy Potter  
 Judy Potter  
 John Ennis  
 H. A. Schneider  
 H. A. Schneider  
 H. A. Schneider  
 Pirkko Fanelli  
 Sarah Daneker\*  
 William Lydon-Vaiden  
 Kristine Brecht  
 Shirley Santora

\*Teacher is a member of The German Society of Maryland

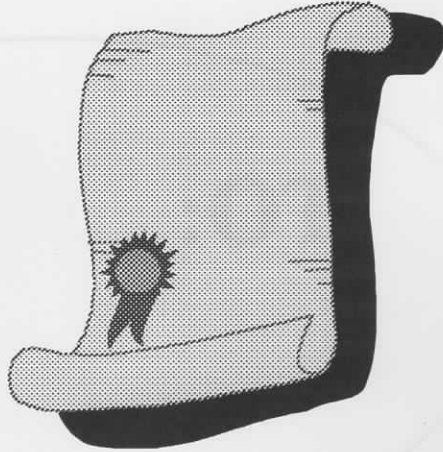
MANY THANKS to Betty Niemann, to Bob Sheppard and the Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von Maryland for its cooperation in making arrangements for the presentation.



## HISTORICAL NOTES

### THE SOCIETY 100 YEARS AGO

Reports of cruelties and murders aboard oyster vessels were so frequent that the Hibernian Society, the St. Andrew's Society, the St. George's Society, the French Benevolent Society and the Charity Organizations Society of Baltimore joined the German Society in establishing a "Bureau for the Protection of the Oyster Dredgers." Louis P. Hennigausen, the president of the German Society, was elected president of the Bureau. They introduced laws to the Maryland General Assembly, but the politically influential oyster industry so amended them as to defeat completely its object.



Convinced that Maryland politics would block our efforts to protect the workers, the Society went to Washington. Our members testified before Congress and succeeded in getting national legislation to protect the oyster dredgers. Hennigausen wrote: "A large share of the credit for this noble achievement is due to The German Society of Maryland, which took the initiative, and with energy and persistency continued at large expense for many years the human effort to obtain good, effective laws for the protection of the oyster dredgers."

### PREAMBLE TO OUR CHARTER

In the preamble to our charter, granted in 1817 by the Maryland Legislature, the purpose of the German Society of Maryland was succinctly set forth as follows:

"Whereas, the arrival of Germans and Switzers from Europe and the numerous settlements made by them in various parts of the Union, have induced a number of persons in this State to associate themselves for the purpose of removing or lessening their distresses in a strange land."

As stated in our Report of 1925: "The direct point in mind of the benevolently inclined founders was the suffering endured by the REDEMPTIONERS, a term applied to emigrants who, lacking the funds to pay their passage across the ocean, were induced to sign a contract that on their arrival in America they would pay out of their first earnings. If any passenger died on the voyage, the surviving members of the family would make good his loss to the Captain. Whereby it happened, that a wife who had lost her husband or child at sea, on her arrival here would be sold to serve in bondage, for five year."

### GERMAN SOCIETY 50 YEARS AGO

During World War II, the Internal Revenue Service investigated every organization having the name "German" in its title. Our Society passed muster and retained its tax-exempt status.

The following appeared in the minutes of a meeting of the Society held on April 12, 1943:

"Our country is at war, and one of our enemies is Germany. Our duty, therefore, is to aid our country in the prosecution of the war and to do whatever lies within our scope to bring the war to a successful conclusion.

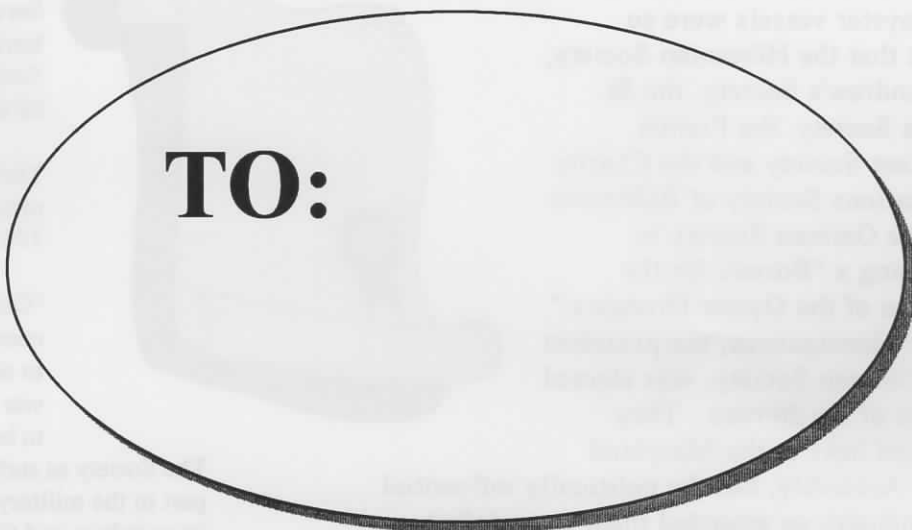
The Society as such can, of course, take no active, physical part in the military affairs of the nation. However, many of its members and their sons are actively engaged in the military and naval forces of the United States, thereby giving their all to crush our enemies."

### OUR SOCIETY 69 YEARS AGO

Under the heading "Some of Our Wards, as seen by the Agent", from the Society's "Report" for 1925-26 appears the following:

"Mother deaf and dumb; widow with four children; has a struggle with poverty. The greatest trouble in the family, however, is the eldest girl, very pretty with love for clothes, and wayward and unruly. She goes to work in a sea-green crepe-de-chine gown with a three-strand string of beads, champagne colored stockings and apologies for shoes. She does not make a practical, efficient worker, and has difficulty in holding positions."

The German Society of Maryland  
P.O. Box #22585  
Baltimore, Maryland 21203-4585  
(410) 685-0450



**COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

COMMITTEE

CHAIR

Membership	Donald Tillman
Awards Banquet	Gerald Wittstadt
Festival	Harry Gruel
Scholarship	Sarah Daneker
Ecumenical Service	TBA
Summer Picnic	Roland Brockmeyer
Essay Contest	Clement Ehrhardt
Newsletter	Mia Walsh
H.S. German Studies	Michael Nieberding
Archives	Brigitte Fessenden
Kirchgang	Dorothy Galway
Heritage and Culture	TBA
Geneology	Jane Awalt
Publicity	Christel van der Berg

This Newsletter is a publication of The German Society of Maryland - an organization founded in 1783 and incorporated in 1817.

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