

VEREINSNACHRICHTEN

MARCH, 1995

ISSUE FIVE

1994 ACTIVITIES IN REVIEW

1994 was a year of many activities for our Society. The annual meeting in March, with its excellent German buffet, was well attended.

There were three bus trips to the German Embassy. In April we sponsored a sell-out bus trip to attend a banquet and dance at the embassy. In November and December we joined with the Bürgerverein on trips for art exhibits at the Embassy and to the Ambassador's residence.

In May the Society presented \$1,300 in awards to high school students of the German language at a packed-house symphony held in the Adlersaal.

In August we staffed a booth at the annual German Festival at Carroll Park.

September saw our Defender's Day celebration, with a tour of the monuments to the Maryland defenders of the War of 1812, including our own General John Stricker.

October brought our annual Kirchgang and a revival of our annual picnic. The picnic was held on the estate of members Roland and Lorraine Brockmeyer. The picnic, a tradition for many years, The annual awards dinner in November honored our most long-standing member, Paul Schaefer, for his many charitable and civic activities.

With the Society for the History of Germans, the Society co-sponsored its annual Thanksgiving-eve ecumenical service, which produced a very large turnout.

Ending the year was the annual Christmas luncheon given by the Women's Auxiliary.

The Society made numerous financial contributions to a number of educational activities: \$13,000 for scholarships to students at various Maryland colleges and universities; \$850 to the German Language School at Zion; \$250 to the Frank Plogman scholarship fund at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County; \$1,300 to Essex Community College; and \$1,000 to the Language Department of UMBC for acquiring audio and video aids and publications for the teaching of German.

ESSAY CONTEST OFFERS \$1000



The Society's essay contest for junior high school students is now in the judging stage. Three prizes are offered. First prize: \$500; second: \$300 and third prize \$200.

The subject of the essay is "General John Stricker, Hero of the Battle of North Point." The purpose of the contest is to make young people aware of the important contributions of German Americans to our State and Nation. General Stricker was instrumental in the Society's incorporation in 1817, and served as vice-president of our Society for ten years.

The essay committee, chaired by Clement D. Ehrhardt, II, is reviewing the numerous submissions. Winners will receive their prizes at a ceremony on May 12th.

ANNUAL MEETING MARCH 10

The annual meeting of the membership was held in the meeting room at Zion Church, City Hall Plaza, on March 10. A buffet dinner preceded the meeting. Six Board members were elected for the three year term 1995-1997: Donald E. Tillman; Mark Pothast, Harry Gruel; Roland Brockmeyer; Ronald Antlitz and Fredericke Hurdle Hecht. The members heard committee reports and plans for the future. The meeting concluded with individual members speaking on matters "for the good of the order".

"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."

SPRING Events Calendar

EDELWEISS BUS TRIP TO DINNER THEATRE



The Edelweiss Club has invited members of our Society to go along on its bus trip to the Allenberry (PA) Dinner Theater on Saturday, June 17, 1995. The cost for the bus, dinner and show ("Forever Plaid") is \$43.00. Call Carl Neilleber at 747-2431 for reservations.

PROFESSOR ECKHOFF TO ADDRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Dr. Jorgen Eckhoff will address the annual dinner meeting of the Society for the History of Germans in Maryland on April 18, 1995 at Martin's Eudowood. His subject is: "Trials and Tribulations of German Surnames in America." Dr. Eckhoff is on the faculty of Pennsylvania State University and is the Director of the Max Cade German American Research Institute. Members of the German Society are invited to attend the event. Reservations for the dinner may be obtained from Judge Gerard W. Wittstadt (410-321-8608 days; 410-825-0808 evenings). Tickets are \$25. A cash bar is available.

TRIBUTE TO DIETRICH BONHOEFFER, MARTYR

An ecumenical lecture series is under way to commemorate the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a theologian who was imprisoned for his part in the conspiracy against Adolph Hitler and the Nazi regime. He was executed April 9, 1945. Three lectures remain, on Sundays from 3 - 5 PM at Zion Lutheran Church, City Hall Plaza, March 19, 26 and April 2. They will explore Bonhoeffer's life of faith, truth and moral courage and its importance to society. A dramatic performance is set for Monday April 3 at Lovely Lane United Methodist Church, 2200 St. Paul St. On Sunday, April 9 at 3:00 PM an ecumenical service will begin at the Holocaust Memorial, Gay and Lombard Streets, followed by a solemn procession to Zion Church for a service of remembrance, including elements from Bonhoeffer's writings and musical enjoyment. Call our office for a leaflet giving details of the events.

BAY BRIDGE WALK MAY 7TH: MEMBERSHIP BOOTH PLANNED



The Board of Directors plans to set up a booth to inform the walkers of the goals of the Society and the eligibility for membership. Walking and hiking is a traditional German hobby and thousand of walking clubs exist today in Germany.

A number of "Volksmarch" clubs are active in Maryland. Mark your calendar for May 7th to join other members of the Society in the annual walk across the Bay Bridge. An announcement will be sent to the members in April.

STUDENT AWARDS TO BE MADE ON MAY 12TH

The third annual high school student awards for proficiency in the German language will be given at a convocation on May 12th. The site for the affair is the Adlersaal at Zion Church, City Hall Plaza. The German Society will give a \$100 grant to each student from a high school in the State of Maryland whose test scores in the national German language exam are in the 90th percentile. The exam is administered by the American Association of Teachers of German. The Society's sponsorship is in accord with one of the stated purposes of the Society: to encourage the study of the German language.

At the same time, prizes will be awarded to the winners of the Society's essay contest for 7th, 8th & 9th grade students. This year's topic is: General John Stricker, Hero of the Battle of North Point. (General Stricker led the Maryland militia in defeating the British army when it attacked Baltimore after invading Washington and burning the White House. He was also an incorporator of our Society and was its vice-president for 10 years.) All of our members are invited to the event, to give further encouragement and to honor the student. Refreshments will be served.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE TARGETS 1000

At the May 1994 special meeting of members, the Directors were given the mission of promoting the Society's membership, with a target of 1,000 members by 1999. The target for 1995 is to reach a membership of 600. Donald Tillman, is chairman of the drive which will peak in April. The Society has a reserve of our newsletters which we will send, at a member's request, to prospective members. The Society will mail an application and invitation to them with a note that is sent upon your recommendation. Or if you want to send it yourself, call the office and Dorothy Galway will mail the material directly to you.

DUES POLICY FOR NEW MEMBERS

Members joining before July 1, 1995 will not be re-billed for dues until July 1, 1996. Members joining between 7-1-95 and 12-31-95 will not be re-billed until Jan. 1, 1997.

WHY JOIN THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND?

From John Aymold:

To get in touch with your German roots. To learn what is going on in the German community in Maryland now, and to learn about the many good works done by our ancestors in the past. To meet new friends with similar interests and goals. To help spread the news and goodwill in our State. To learn to be proud of our German Heritage.

From Clement D. Ehrhardt, Jr.

Most of us feel there is need for organizations that promote the public welfare. The German Society of Maryland, founded in 1783, has a long history of charitable works. Today that focus is centered upon our youth, the next generation.

Our organization has a strong history of granting scholarship aid to worthy college students. It also recognized excellence in German language studies by high school pupils. Now the German Society is sponsoring an essay contest for middle school students.

By joining The German Society of Maryland, a person affiliates with a serious and responsible organization that indisputably reflects a heritage of good works. Membership also makes a statement that a person is proud of the Germanic heritage and the contributions made by those of German descent, both in Maryland and around the world.

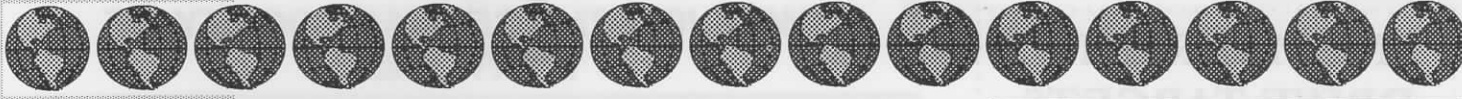
From Jane K. Awalt

To learn more about our ethnic heritage by associating with people of the same heritage background. To share in the camaraderie with people of the same heritage background. To help the funding of the scholarship committee's work, either financially or in some manner that will help put something back into the community for the future of Germans in Maryland. To promote genealogical research and to ensure the continuity of our own genealogical research of our families. We have completed a great deal of German research and hope that we will learn of more possibilities through the membership. To help honor the memory of our German ancestors.

From Harry D. Gruel

To be part of an historic Society, founded in 1783 to offer assistance and service to immigrants of German, Austrian and Swiss ancestry. Membership offers the opportunity to persons of German extraction to link with those of common heritage and to work together to promote German traditions, language and culture through educations, social and benevolent programs — seeking not to be exclusive but rather to promote a spirit of inclusiveness in sharing with other ethnic and American groups. There are opportunities to foster memorable relationships between our country and the Federal Republic of Germany by meeting and entertaining visiting groups of singers, dancers, musicians, diplomats, military members, relatives and friends.

The Society is a member of the Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein, the umbrella organization which acts to keep us all informed of social and cultural activities of the German-American community in Maryland.



ACCOMODATIONS NEEDED FOR GERMAN STUDENT VISITORS

During the course of the year a number of groups visit Baltimore from Germany. Most of the groups are students of high school and college ages on a musical or academic tour. The German Society gets calls for help in putting them up, generally for a day or two but sometimes longer...and usually on short notice.

We are making a roster of members who might be interested and willing to take in one or more guests from Germany – so that we can canvass you on short notice.

We received a call recently for help in placing some German students who are visiting Towson State University, but due to the short notice and summer schedules, we were unable to place any of the students.

If you are willing to help in this type of project in the future, please drop a note to our office stating:

1. Age group preferred.
2. Any preference for boys or girls.
3. Number you can accommodate.

We will put you on the roster and call you occasionally to see if the proposed time is convenient.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED

The Society is accepting applications for grants for students of German ancestry who are currently attending college in Maryland.

The Society's scholarship program has been in effect since 1957. Nearly \$500,000.00 in student aid has been distributed.

The scholarship committee is chaired by Sarah Daneker, who teaches German at Baltimore City College. The membership committee meets in the spring to review the applications and vote on the granting of awards. In recent years, the grants have ranged from \$500 to \$2000 per student.

In 1986 our Board of Directors established a scholarship fund and each year thereafter transferred a substantial portion of the earnings from the Society's investments to the fund. A goal of \$150,000 was set for the fund. As a result of sound investments made under the guidance of John Ensor, one of our board members, the fund attained \$180,000 in 1994. The 1993 awards exceeded \$20,000 and the 1994 awards amounted to \$13,000.

Applicants must have a 3.0 scholastic average, provide evidence of German ancestry and demonstrate need for financial aid. Applicants who are studying German language or culture receive special consideration.

Members of the Society who know of eligible students should encourage them to apply. Application forms may be obtained from the Society's office.

95TH ANNIVERSARY OF BÜRGERVEREIN

The Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von Maryland will celebrate its 95th anniversary with a banquet and dance at the Sparrows Point Country Club on Saturday, May 13th. The German Society is a member of the Bürgerverein. The banquet is held every 5 years. The Society hopes to take several tables at the event, and our members are urged to mark their calendars for this event. Call our office for details and reservations.

TOURS OF BALTIMORE'S GERMAN HISTORY

Baltimore has a rich history of German tradition. At the turn of the century, all laws of the City Council were published in both German and English. The city had several grammar schools with lessons conducted in German, several German daily newspapers and many churches having German services. Our Society plans to organize a tour of the places of German American historical interest.

Harry Gruel, a member of our executive committee, contacted Zippy Larson, owner of Shoe Leather Safaris, a firm which the Baltimore Business Journal calls one of the city's better-kept tourism secrets. The firm has been conducting tours since 1985 through the town, both on foot and by bus, selling ethnic "people, scandals, the neighborhoods, the cultures, the social times and even the food." Harry will meet with Zippy to try to set up a tour for our members and guests area who would like to learn more about the city's German ethnic history.

Our members are requested to drop a note to our office to give any ideas of places of German ethnic interest which should be put on the tour list.

GOETHE SOCIETY REORGANIZATION

The Maryland Chapter of the Goethe Society, which has been dormant for some years, is in the process of reorganizing. The Towson State University Department of Languages is cooperating in this endeavor and a business meeting of the Society was held on January 25th at the Potomac Lounge of the University. The Goethe Society encourages the study of German literature. Its meetings are conducted in the German language. Persons interest in participating in the Goethe Society activities may call Brigitte V. Fessenden at 410-532-7581 after 6 PM.

**SOCIETY RESPONDS
TO YOUNG GIRL'S
INQUIRY**

Cristen Lahner, a grade school pupil researching her family's heritage, wrote to us that her great grandfather came from a town called "Amsberg" and asked if we could help her find it. We responded by sending her a map of Germany, circling the two towns of that name. One is a city in northern Germany in the state of Nordrhein-Westfalen, and the other is a little village in southern Germany in Bavaria. We left Cristen to figure out whether she has Westphalian or Bavarian blood in her veins.

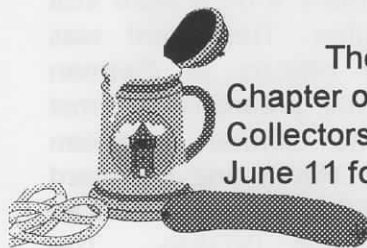
GIFT TO PLOGMAN FUND

Our Society gave \$250 toward a scholarship honoring the memory of former member Frank Plogman at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. The fund was established by the Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von Maryland.

The Bürgerverein raises at least \$2,000 per year to assist a German language student at UMBC in a summer program in Germany.

Frank Plogman was a dedicated worker for the Society and for other German organizations. He was an artist who helped design and build the 15-foot tall fruit display which welcomed visitors to the 5th Regiment Armory at the Oktoberfest. He was active in the German language and culture programs at UMBC.

STEIN COLLECTORS' MEETING



The Maryland Chapter of Stein Collectors will meet on June 11 for a display and stein sale in New

Market, MD. and in the evening for dinner at Schifferstadt near Hagerstown. For information call Joe Brent (703) 904-5579.

PROGRAM TO PRESERVE SOCIETY'S ARCHIVES



Brigitte V. Fessenden, chair of the Cultural Committee, has made a preliminary analysis of the Society's archives. She concluded that we must improve their maintenance and arrange for permanent preservation of our materials and artifacts.

The goal, Mrs. Fessenden said, must be to display these articles in an archival and/or museum setting, accessible to our members and to the public.

Mrs. Fessenden has asked for volunteers to help sort and select documents for microfilming and placement in the Maryland Hall of Records. Members who wish to serve on the Archives Project should call her at her home (532-7581) after 7:30 PM or during the day at 396-4866 (push "5" after entering voice-mail).

We have 10,000 documents which need to be reviewed for selection for microfilming. Mrs. Fessenden has arranged with the State Archivist for the microfilming of selected records and that project is near completion. One copy of the microfilm will be made available to the public at Maryland's Hall of Records. Another copy will be available for review in our office.

DANK CELEBRATES 35TH YEAR

The Deutch-Amerikaner National Kongress celebrated 35 years of service to the German American community with the publication of its anniversary issue of its German-American Journal 35th anniversary .

**SOME FAMOUS
GERMAN AMERICANS
IN SCIENCE, BUSINESS
AND INDUSTRY**

- ◆ August Belmont, race horses, Lexington, Ky.
- ◆ Henry Bessemer, inventor, steel industry
- ◆ Werner von Braun, rocket scientist
- ◆ H. J. Heinz, pickle works
- ◆ Ottmar Mergenthaler, invented linotype
- ◆ Busch, Pabst, Schlitz, brewers
- ◆ Charles Steinmetz, the wizard of General Electric
- ◆ J. M. Studebaker, wagons, later automobiles
- ◆ George Westinghouse, electric and mechanical inventions
- ◆ George Weyerhaeuser, lumber king

"AMERICA" NAMED BY GERMAN



It was a German who named America. Martin Waldseemüller, a cosmographer

born in Freiburg, in his book "Cosmographiae Introductio" (1507), called the new land "America" in honor of the explorer Amerigo Vespucci. He put that name on his map which is now in the British Museum. Interestingly, the name is of Germanic origin, being the italianized form of the German "Almarich", which means "eternal, brilliant, forceful."

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

EUGENE & ERNIE SCHMIDT visited Ernie's cousin, Robert Starkloff at Tannroda near Weimer recently. Ernie saw the estate where her grandfather, William Starkloff was born. She learned of the loss of property and other hardships her family suffered under the Russians. Even though she had written to her family before the unification of Germany, she did not learn much about daily life there until this visit. Ernie's Virginia cousins, Carol and Gary Matuck accompanied them on the trip. The German relatives were very excited at the visit by their American cousins and plan to return the favor by coming to the United States next May.

LUDWIG PEITSCH, who has led us in the singing of both the German and American national anthems at our annual awards banquet for many years, underwent a serious operation for cancer at the National Institute in Washington. We send him our best wishes so that he will recover and lead us in our singing for years to come. His son and daughter in law, **David and Julie Peitsch** are loyal members of the Society.

IN MEMORY OF

The Board of Directors passed resolutions directing contributions of \$50 each to the Society's Educational Fund in honor of Isolde I. Kluge and Eve Schultheiss and John H. Horst.

Ilse Kluge (nee Kuenzel) was the mother of our member, Isolde Brooke, mother in law of our Director, Dandridge Brooke and grandmother of members D. William Brooke, Esq. and Brian Brooke. Ilse attended many of the Society's functions and was well known in the German-American community.

Eve Schultheiss was a long-time member of the Society and is the sister of our member, Betty Niemann. She was an active communicant of Zion Church and assisted in its management and operations. Eve was also active in the Edelweiss Club.

John H. Horst, also a long-time member, was the chairman of the board of the Lord Baltimore Laundry, a popular business in metropolitan Baltimore which was started by his father in 1920. He was a board member and a vice-president and treasurer of Franklin Square Hospital, and was a board member of the General German Aged Peoples Home, for 35 years, to the time of his death in 1994. He is survived by his wife of 39 years, the former Evelyn White (who remains a member of the German Society) and his daughter, Jean H. Gore of Ruxton.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

GOV. WILLIAM DONALD SHAEFER.

In January, Gov. Schaefer left the governorship of Maryland after serving the limit of two terms. Twelve buildings, institutions or locations in Maryland have been named for Governor Schaefer, ranging from the Schaefer Tower in Baltimore City, to the Schaefer Promenade at the National Aquarium, Schaefer Hall at St. Mary's College, the Schaefer Center for Superconductivity Research at the University of MD, College Park and the Schaefer International Terminal at Baltimore-Washington International Airport. Don served as Mayor of Baltimore City before his election as Governor.

JUDGE ROBERT GERSTUNG, who died last Spring, was honored by a 5K race and walk which raised \$49,000 for the American Heart Association.

FRANK GUNTHER, our 1993 honoree, has stepped down as Chairman of the Board of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Maryland. His successor is J. Owen Cole, former president of First National Bank.



GERMAN CHANCELLOR VISITS WHITE HOUSE

Chancellor Helmut Kohl came to Washington on February 9 on a state visit with President Clinton. The event was attended by many officers of German American organizations, preeminently Ernst Ott, president of the German American National Congress (DANK) and Bernhard Freitag, president of the German American Committee of the USA (VDAK). The German Society of Maryland's president, Theodore Potthast, was invited to attend. However, admission was by numbered invitation which (although mailed early) arrived in Baltimore on Feb. 10, courtesy of US Postal Service.

MEMBER NEWS

IN GRATEFUL THANKSGIVING

Thank You

To **PAUL AND LOTTIE SCHAEFER** for a most generous gift of \$5,000.00 to the Society. Paul was the 1994 Honoree at the Society's Annual Awards Banquet. The honoree's silver bowl was given at the Christmas luncheon of the German Society's Women's Auxiliary. Our Society's President presented the

bowl to Mrs. Schaefer, pointing out that she was the person who made it possible for Paul to be free to go about performing so many good deeds and charitable works (and that a good many of them were her ideas!).

To **PIPER & MARBURY**, for a gift of two modern computers. They will be used in processing the paperwork of the Society and in the maintenance of our membership records and archives. The gift was made from P&M's surplus property, on the recommendation of its information systems manager, GSOM member Mia Potthast Walsh.



The German Society is sponsoring a college actors' trip to Germany. Cockpit in Court, Maryland's largest summer theater and an activity of Essex Community College, will represent the United States at the Donzdorf theatrical festival in Germany in May, 1995. The Essex Comm. College group was requested by the State Department to participate in the festival. The college needed financial help to send its troupe of 10 actors to Germany. Dr. W. P. Ellis, Chairman of the Division of Humanities and Arts, asked us to pay for some plane tickets at \$650 each.

The Society contributed \$1,300. As a sign of its gratitude, Dr. Ellis has extended a general invitation to the members of the Society to attend the final dress rehearsal of the show, "From Berlin to Broadway".

Members who would like to attend the dress rehearsal should call our office and put your name on the list to be contacted when the date is definitely known. The event will be held on the campus of Essex Community college in early May.

REPORT #43 COPIES AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS

The Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland, our "sister" Society is now publishing its "Report #43". This volume is dedicated to the memory of Dr. William H. McClain, a long time member of the German Society of Maryland who lost his life in 1994 under tragic circumstances, the victim of a criminal attack. This volume will also present a biography of Dr. McClain. He was the chairman of the Department of German at The Johns Hopkins University for many years.

The German Society has subscribed to 100 copies of this booklet, to help make known some of the activities of the members of our Society. Our copies will be distributed within the national German-American community. They will also be available to our members on a first-come, first-served basis. Call our office if you wish a copy to be reserved for you.

"PIONEERS IN SERVICE" NEEDS UPDATING

Each new member receives a copy of the history of the Society, a 54-page book entitled "Pioneers in Service." Our supplies are running out and needs updating. We need a few volunteers to do the writing. If you have an interest in history, writing, genealogy, current events and would like to help, please call our office and volunteer.

FRAUENHILFSVEREIN REPORT

The Women's Auxiliary of the German Society of Md. reported that its activities for 1994 were successful. The meetings (conducted in the German language) were well attended and their membership has increased. The meetings featured the standard German mainstay of kaffee und kuchen, with plenty of conversations and recitations, and singing of beautiful old folk songs. The Auxiliary made a bus trip to Cape May, NJ. They also made some charitable contributions.

The Frauenhilfsverein meets monthly at Zion Church in Baltimore City. Persons interested in joining may contact the president, Margarete Kramer, by calling our Society's office.

S.O.B.: (SAVE OUR BIBLES)

Do you have a bible with genealogical information on the first couple of pages? If so, we would like to copy these pages with the title page on acid free paper to preserve this family information. Your Bible does not have to leave your possession. Records will be copied while you wait. The information will be placed in a national databank. Contact Jane K. Awall 2207 Westridge Road Timonium, MD 21093-3218 Phone (410) 252-3493

FOUNDED 1783



The German Society of Maryland

OFFICE OF THE SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 22585 BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21203-4585

685-0450

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- Hon. Gerard W. Wittstadt
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- Vernon H. Wiesand

mail to:	
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**GERMAN SOCIETY
WELCOMES NEW
MEMBERS**

We welcome the following new members to the German Society and urge them to participate actively in the events of the society:

- Richard Ater
- Carrie M. Arnold
- Wolfgang Feile
- Ginger Feile
- Robert Karl Fritzsche
- Diane Schmidt Fisher
- William C. Franz
- Robert Herman Gay
- Louise Gay
- Elsbeth Holland
- Dr. Arno C. Huther
- Nanci Huther
- Lane Juergen
- M. Arlies Juergen
- Rowland E. King
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- Walter Koefler
- William H. Oeser
- Wanda E. Oeser
- Fred Schneider
- Granville Warren Wehland
- Constance C. Wehland
- Arno Weidner
- Genevie Weidner
- Hildegard Zitrauer

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ Zipcode _____

Spouse(optional) _____ Phone _____

I hereby apply for membership in the German Society.

Signature _____

Mail along with \$15 annual dues to the Society. A spouse may be added as a member at no additional cost.

This newsletter is a publication of The German Society of Maryland—an organization founded in 1783 and incorporated in 1817

Editors and Desktop Publishing
Catherine A. Potthast
Mia Potthast Walsh

All members and friends are encouraged to submit items of interest to Theodore J. Potthast, Jr. at 1819 Leadburn Road, Towson, Maryland 21204-1830