

Vereinsnachrichten

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

Chapter 100, February 3, 1818

October, 2021 Issue 123

President's Message-Kraig Dean

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I hope everyone had a safe and fun filled summer. The society has been moving along through the summer months. We held our June Executive Committee meeting in person at Zion Church. The reason we held the meeting on a Friday was to support the Brats and Bier event at the Church. Then in July as many of you knew we had our booth at the German Festival held at Timonium Fair grounds, this year under the grandstand. I must commend the Bürgerverein on how well the event went with a just a short 3 months to prepare. The Society members stepped up and supported the booth by volunteering and assisting at the entrance. It was good to see people who are not members of the board step up to help. A big thank you to all who volunteered! Let us know if you would like to help the next time at this event.

At the end of July, the Society held our first in person Board of Directors meeting in over a year. The meeting was held at Zion Church on the Brats and Bier night. This was done so to show support for the Church but to also allow our Board members to attend the movie night at the church.

Both meetings also allowed the board to get a look at the Stricker Monument that has a permanent

location on the Church grounds. If you are in the city, I would suggest you stop by the Church and get a look at this wonderful monument to one of our former members and past 1st Vice President of the Society.

Make sure you have our updated email address: GermanSocietyofMD@gmail.com This way you can get updated information on events. If you don't have email, maybe someone close to you has one that we can send to for you.

By the time you receive this newsletter it will be late September. Summer is over and fall is upon us. My hope is that we can continue to hold in person meetings and events. October we are scheduled to have our quarterly Board of Directors meeting, the meeting is typically held on the fourth Thursday of the month which would be on October 28th. Also, in October, make sure you sign up for at least one of the nine seminars planned for German-American Heritage Month. Details are on page 12-13.

November 6th is the Annual Banquet. First Vice President Bill Kommalan is heading the committee for the event. This is a daunting task that Bill has agreed to take on, as we are still unsure what the city, State, or CDC recommendation will be. As I am writing this, I am sure every-



one is aware that there is talk of another lock-down.

Oh my, then we are into the start of the Holidays. Thanksgiving which begins the whirl wind of Holiday events. Christkindlmarkt at Zion Church although the Society does not do anything at the church that weekend, we should as individuals try to support them.

I'm hoping that everyone stays healthy and happy during the upcoming holidays and events.

Kraig A. Dean

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



Unser Kalender

| | | |
|----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| August 28 | Board of Directors Meeting | TBF |
| September 18 | German Society Picnic | TBD |
| September | Stricker Unveiling | Zion Garden |
| September 23 | Executive Committee Meeting | GAV Office |
| October | Heritage Month Seminar Series | See Pages 12-13 |
| October 28 | Board of Directors Meeting | TBD |
| November 6 | 237th Annual German Society Dinner | TBD |
| November 18 | Executive Committee Meeting | TBD |
| November 27-28 | Christkindlmarkt | Zion Church |

Publication Dates:

January-March: Deadline 12/15

April-June: Deadline 3/15

July-September: Deadline 6/15

October-December: Deadline 9/15

Links:

German Society Website:

www.germansociety-md.com

Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein:

www.md-germans.org

German Marylanders:

www.germanmarylanders.org

Welcome New Members

Anja & Joseph Abbott

Linda Lee & Brett C. Adams

Nicholas Breidigam

Constance Brieger

Ronnie Brown

Michael & Sue Burke

Greg Cochran

Stephen & Rosann Curran

Dianne DeSantis

Robert Disque (Lifetime Membership)

Nancy Drost

Katie Fetchik

James Friedline

William & Patti Goodman

David & Barbara Heitman

Bryon K. & Latroma L. Hartzog



William Homberg & Tristan Murrell

Allison Jian

Peggy Lindgren

Brian Lott

Sonya & Mac McMullen

Teresa Riedel

Jean Cole Riggs & Brian Nesbit

Dixie Shipley

Tarra Swallow

And to our New Student Members

Nina Grafton

Gelsey Jian

Mason Monroe

Shane Monroe

Alex Shipley

The 120th Annual German Festival

Last issue I wrote an article about the history of the German Festival. It has changed throughout the years, primarily the location, but the energy is still the same. It is a community



atmosphere as we gather to share our heritage and the stories of those that came before us...the trailblazers. I really hope that you had the opportunity to attend the 120th Annual German Festival. This was an event that many thought could never possibly happen due to time constraints and complications with tiered lifting of COVID restrictions, but German American community fooled us all and presented a wonderful event. The community spirit is alive and well. The Bürgerverein and our German clubs had only three to four months to put this event together and they pulled it off beautifully.

The event, held the weekend of July 10th, witnessed steady crowds of 2600+ throughout Saturday and Sunday. It was especially wonderful that 'Mother Nature' must have been paid handsomely for some pretty good weather. The vendors were not as many, but those that set up shop did not disappoint. No matter if you were

looking for tees, jewelry, beautiful pottery or a sweet pair of Lederhosen, they had it. Patrons could feast on Schnitzel, both pork and chicken, Bratwurst, Bauernwurst and a few other Würste with heaping sides of sauerkraut and potato salad. We cannot forget the pretzels, pickles, cakes or the sweet cinnamon coated nuts as lite fare. This was washed down with several brands and many pitchers of German beers.

The festivities opened with a prayer from Pastor Anke Deibler of Zion Church and the annual parade with the Regiment von Huyn and of course, the little Dirndl clad Mädchen seated high on the beer barrel. After the signing of the national anthems by the Arion Gesangverein, the only surviving [founded in 1850] singing group in the area, the party was officially opened. A brief note on the



Regiment von Huyn, as it always struck me as odd that we would have ceremonial guards that were actually Germans helping the British during our Revolutionary War. I also know that many Hessian soldiers remained here and became American citizens, and have certainly enriched our Festival. This year they introduced a new young piccolo player, Roy Wulf. This young man was a pleasure to speak with and in doing so, I learned he plays multiple instruments and even writes his own music. His dad Douglas was quite proud.

Entertainment was constant throughout both days with Mike Surat and the Continentals, the Alpenrose Schuhplattler Verein and the

Arion Gesangverein, as well as the Alex Meixner Band and if anyone knows how to party it is the Grammy nominated Alex Meixner. Alex is a nationally acclaimed musician, performer, bandleader, educator and a leading advocate of polka music. He was formally trained in classical and jazz. For Alex, it's more than playing energetic shows; it is a mission to provide a much needed positive experience that pulls communities together to celebrate history, culture and genuinely good times. Alex and his band had the crowd



at the Festival from his first song and entertained throughout the evening on Saturday and most of the day on Sunday. Whether Alex was playing the Beer Hall Polka, Why Die Thirsty or even Ozzie Osborne, he made sure the crowd 'Made Some Noise'.

The children were entertained with a rock-climbing wall, pony rides and of course, Professor Horn's Punch & Judy show. Many of the children enjoyed dancing to the bands. You are never too young to learn how to polka.

Our, the German Society's, booth was a huge hit. In the two days, we accepted twenty-six new members, including four new student members. A big GSM thanks to those that set up, packed up and worked the booth....Sherry Veith, Maureen Helinski, Marc Fisher, Stephen Harper, Amy Unverzagt, Chris Smithson, Brad Schlegel, Katharine, Pirotte, Shirley and Vito Santora, Bill and Nancy Parks, Linda and Zack Butt, Bill and Shelley Arnold, and Anton Smoot.



GSM Members in Germany, The Lammers, Survived the Great July Flood Disaster

By: Theodore J. Potthast

Dr. Bernhard Lammers and his wife Nicole, have been dues paying members of our Society for many years. Their home in Ahrweiler, sits less than 100 feet from the Ahr River, which is not much more than a slow flowing, two-foot deep stream, where you can sit on the banks and



R. to l: Nicole & Bernhard Lemmers, Ted Potthast, Ted's cousin William and Ted's son Jack Potthast.

watch the ducks swim by as you cast a line for a few small fish. Dr. Lammers is an internist, and a department head at a local hospital. He is my cousin: my grandfather was the brother of his grandmother.

Nicole is a nurse who specializes in controlling communicable diseases at five hospitals in the region. The Ahrweiler region is a lovely area, which includes a walled city dating back to the twelfth century.

In mid-July, the region was hit with an incredible flood, preceded by a wall of water more than 25 feet high. The flood brought waters to the top of the first floor of the Lammers' home. From their second-floor balcony, they could see bodies floating down the river. Hundreds of people drowned. The flood was unprecedented in the several thousand year history of Germany. It was a great relief to receive an email on July 23rd, stating that they were safe but also describing some of the horrors.

The email read as follows:

"Dear TED, Our house was over-

flooded. We did not lose our house. But water was in first (ground) floor. We lost most of our things. We survived. Some villages do

Not exist any More. You can Compare our Situation-in Many-Parts With Situation of my mother 30.5 .1943 in, some Parts in Ahrweiler Region it-is-like Coventry (1940). Dead persons -Swam- Along-our house. Until today we have 116 dead persons 3500 missing persons (But I think Most- of them are dead. The Last Months-you could-Not reach me by-Telephone because of Road - Works-only by Mail. Greetings Bernhard and Nicole"*

I was extremely happy to learn that my cousins survived the flood. We had been seeing television clips of the disaster and had been reading newspaper articles describing the havoc. I promptly responded to Bernhard's email with my own, telling him that his American cousins had been praying for his safety.

Bernhard responded with the following email:

"Dear TED, Thank you for your Message. We are living by Friends. We can Not live in our house. The reparations will Go until may/june 2022. my Father Took a loan. In 1978 the house was payed. The pictures on tv do Not Show how terrible the Situation is. You can compare Situation in many (Not all) Things with world war II. Some villages in Ahrweiler District are completely away (like the English City of Coventry 1940 destroyed by german bombers) In our street



A photo from the neighboring village of Schuld that has been completely washed away

Some Houses have to be tared down . We have no gas water or electricity. It is the greatest catastrophe in Germany since the end of world war II. You can Not Imagine what is Hap-

pening Here. Marauders are going through the Streets, Neonazis beat up my neighbour because he is from Iran. Our Country Germany is weak. In some regions you are not safe. In Ahrweiler a lot of People are traumatized because of the flood They Had to See how People had to die in the water. We Stay in contact Greetings from Germany, Bernhard."*

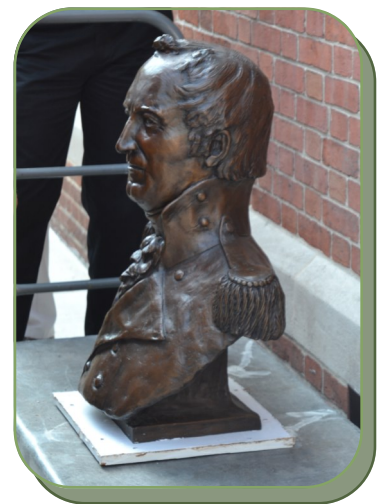
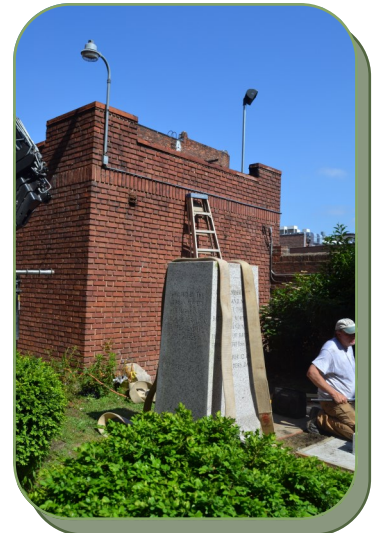
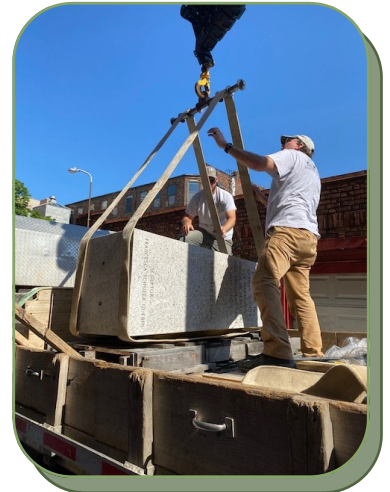
Bernard and Nicole have both visited us in Maryland previ-

* Emails are as written and received from the German family

The Stricker Monument

In our April issue, page 4, Dr. Nicholas Fessenden provided a perfect overview of the personal and military background of General John Stricker. At that time, your Society was working to get the plans and monument itself placed. On June 3, 2021, the cement foundation for the monument was installed and finally on June 10th, after several years of difficult decisions and negotiations, the monument was finally placed. The General Stricker monument is perfectly placed near the proposed entrance of the German American Cultural Center on the grounds of Zion Church.

One of our societies Vice Presidents (1817-1825) and most definitely a Hero of the War of 1812 and the defense of Baltimore, Zion and the GACC entrance is a perfect spot, where many will see his likeness. That likeness was sculpted by Francesca Guerin, daughter of Hans C. Schuler (the younger) and director of the Schuler School of Fine Arts.



The German POWs at Fort George Meade

The office received a letter in March that directly related to an article in our January 2021 issue, written by Reiner Prochaska, 'Pride and Prejudice-German POWs in Maryland'. The letter wanted to make certain that we were aware of the 33 German POWs buried at Fort George G. Meade Army base in Maryland. Many are not aware of the POWs, and almost no one is aware of the two groups, of

which the letter writer, Ms. Helga Sörschen Smith is a member. She is a member of both the 'Christlicher Deutsch-Amerikanischer Damen Klub' or 'Christian German American Women's Club' and the former 'German Wives Club'.

The original founder of both clubs, Irene Kucholick, whose book, 'Iron Curtain Memoirs' (originally titled 'Survive Little Buddy'), which could have referenced her time in communist Germany when she dressed as a boy for safety reasons, was born in Saxony, Germany and lived under Nazi and Communist rule. While working as a nurse in Mainz, she met and married her WWII soldier, Walter Kucholick. The German Government made the marriage difficult, but after more than two years the couple were married in Munich, and in 1953 settled in the Gambrills area in Maryland. Irene began her book in the 70s and completed it almost 10 years later. Completion was difficult, not just because it was typewritten, but primarily because of the memories it evoked, often making lengthy time outs. Irene relates the difficult times in her book, the lack of food, taking



care of her siblings and her fear living in the Russian sector during that time, to name a few. After the war she went on to teach German at an Elementary school and work for the Army Community Service at Fort Meade. Ms. Kucholick died in 2019 at the age of 90. Besides her book, Irene founded the two clubs, both still active today.

The Christian German American Women's Club founded by Irene Kucholick, was co-founded by Sylvia McDowell. Regina Brady, the current President was kind enough to spend some time with me discussing the group. Regina is a German native, born in Wiesbaden. The club, which was founded in 1995 met for years at Fort Meade at the Fort Meade chapel and later at the First Lutheran Church in Odenton. They are a non-denominational organization. They currently have about 20 members and boasted about 60 members at their peak. There are no membership fees, just what you feel you can give. The group does not participate in the POW Ceremony, but is more centered on charitable organizations being regular contributors to the House of Ruth and the Alaskan Pilot program. The

German Wives Club, founded in 1969, were regular participants in the Wreath Ceremonies at Fort Meade. The evening before the event each year, the women would decorate the gravestones with floral arrangements in red, yellow and black, garnished with the German flag. I spoke to Maria Vann, past President of the group, who informed me that due to the age of

the average member, the group folded approximately four years ago.

Each year, for more than 30 years, Fort Meade has held a 'wreath' ceremony in conjunction with Germany's National Day of Mourning. It was organized by Fort Meade authorities at the request of the German Embassy and the Naval Attaché. Until 2011, the ceremony was to honor the 33 German POWs buried there. In 2011, the two Italian soldiers buried at the Rock Avenue cemetery were added (previously there were two separate events).

A Sunpaper article written in 2007 points out that only one German Officer was buried here and the other 32 were 'rank and file' soldiers, not Nazi ideologues. That one officer was Werner Henke, a U-Boat commander. Henke was born on May 13, 1909 in Thorn, Germany and died on June 15, 1944 at Fort Hunt in Virginia, where he climbed the fence on June 15, 1944, one day before the prisoners were to be moved to Canada. He did not heed to the alarm calls and was shot by the guards. Lieutenant Henke served on the U-Boat 515, which was sunk (Continued on page -7-)

Continued from page –7-

by the US on April 9, 1944. Henke was captured with several members of his crew. A book, 'Lone Wolf', tells about the Life and Death of U-Boat Ace Werner Henke, written by Timothy Mulligan and published in 1993. There are several versions of Henke's death and theories. The most popular is that he purposely walked to the fence in broad daylight and was shot when he wouldn't heed warnings...to avoid being sent to Great Britain where he was wanted for war crimes.

The reason I mention the other 32 buried here, as being 'rank and file', is that some will read this and disagree with the Army base having the ceremony, feeling that the enemy is being honored. I look at it more like the soldiers, mostly young men who left home to fight for their country and are not buried in their country, are being remembered.

This year the memorial will take place on November 14. You must have a pass to gain access to the base.

The German POWs at Fort Meade:

Balemann, Friedrich
Bauer, Hugo
Baunach, Georg
Becker, Wilhelm
Bischi, Florian
Driessen, Heinrich
Eckle, Ludwig
Ehgarhartner, George
Felber, Erwin

Fischer, Karl
Gruber, Frantz
Hackel, Herbert
Hartig, Georg
Henke, Werner
Herberhold, Franz
Hugenberg, Ernst
Jungclaus, Johannes
Keuter, Willi
Kirschbaum, Otto
Klausch, Ernst

Kurzwig, Alfred
Mähl, Paul
Mueller, Arthur
Schluster, Richard
Schmidt, Rudolf
Stiegler, Georg
Stuhr, Hermann
Wagner, Otto Ax
Wekerle, Johann
Ziegler, Gustav
Zimmermann, Hermann

To read more:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ftmeade/albums/72157712030039847>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I7PixrxPPO>

www.ftmeade.army.mil/Museum/Museum_POW.html

<https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-2007-11-17-0711170037-story.htm>

<https://www.germanmarylanders.org/cemeteries/german-pows-buried-in-maryland>

<https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/laurel/ph-II-history-ft-meade2-20-20160407-story.html>.

Erntedankfest

Holiday-Sunday October 3, 2021

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, predominantly religious and rural, 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 (Truthahn) has actually replaced the traditional goose.

The US didn't really start celebrating Thanksgiving until 1941 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a bill creating the national holiday. In the US, Thanksgiving is also the start of the Christmas shopping season, however in Germany, that is usually the first Sunday of Advent. Perhaps shopping in October is a little too early...it is actually very late for me.



In Memory-Thomas Alfred Werner

It is with deep sadness we report the passing of Past President and Lifetime Director Thomas 'Tom' Alfred Werner. Tom passed away on August 22, 2021 after a lengthy illness. Tom joined the German Society of Maryland in 2001. He has served as our President from 2012-2014. He has served many positions on our Board of Directors including Investment and Finance Chairman. He was the honoree at the GSM 2018 Awards Banquet for his work in the German-American community and in recognition of his endeavors to develop a closer unity with the German-American community and the organizations representing the community.

Tom has served many German-American organizations and was an integral part of the work and growth of these organizations. Besides the GSM, Tom has served as President of Club Fidelitas, the Maryland Oktoberfest and the Deutschamerikanischer Buergerverein von Maryland, where he also held the positions of Vice President, Treasurer and director. He was essential in planning the festival, being chairman from 2006 to 2009. Tom continued to work on the Festival Committee up to and including the current year. He has also been the Financial Secretary, Treasurer and/or Chairman of Investments of these organizations. He has served as Chairman of the Baltimore



Kickers' Board of Trustees and was an Honorary Life Member of the Kickers. He is also a member of the Edelweiss Club and the Society for the History of Germans in Maryland.

Born in Baltimore on January 26, 1941 to Alfred and Mercedes Werner, Tom's grandfather Alfred Matthew Werner was the native German, born in Me-

mel, Germany until immigration in 1891.

Tom was active in Scouting and was elected into the Order of the Arrow. As an adult he was a member of a Boy Scout Troop Committee. During his boyhood he attended several Maryland Catholic Schools. Then he moved to Connecticut, where he attended public schools. He graduated from Staples High School in Westport, Connecticut.

Tom entered the United States Air Force in 1960 and was stationed in the State of Washington. There he received special training as an electronics technician and he went on to serve in this capacity for an air to air guided missile system. After completing four years in the Air Force, Tom was able to pursue college-level studies with the aid of the .G.I. Bill. He attended the University of Maryland, where he completed a major in Business Administration and a minor in Economics

After completing his college studies Tom went on to work in the field of insurance. In 1964 he accepted a position as a Home Office Trained Underwriter for INA. He held this position for five years and then he joined

his father's independent agency, the Werner Insurance Agency. After this agency was sold, he opened his own agency. It was an agency that provided services to companies that were having difficulty finding insurance for such reasons as transporting materials that were a hazardous risk. Tom worked with the retail agents and placed customers with companies that provided suitable insurance until he retired in 2006.

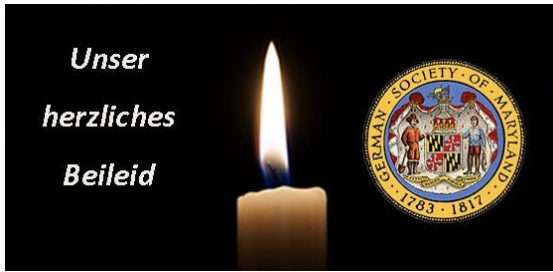
Tom was a long time resident of the Thornleigh neighborhood in Towson.

Tom is survived by his life-partner, Kay Schneck and three children from a previous marriage, Alfred Werner, Wendi Werner, Jamie Walter and son-in-law Mark Walter. They have five grandchildren, Ulrich Werner (wife Molly), Blair Werner, Skyler Kottenstette, Elle Walter, and Lydia Walter. Their first grandchild Brynn Rose Werner, was born this Spring to Uli and Molly.

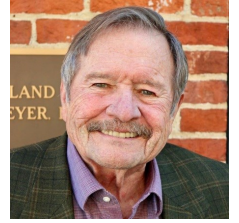
Tom will be deeply missed.

A memorial service is being planned and once all details have been conveyed to the Society, they will be shared via email and Facebook.





Our sympathy is extended to the family and friends of former long-time member and past director, R. Roland Brockmeyer. 'Brock' as he was affectionately called, was a legal giant in Baltimore. He was a University of Baltimore School of Law alumnus and a staunch advocate for those less fortunate. He opened his law practice in the 1960s. According to colleagues and family members, Mr. Brockmeyer did a lot of pro bono work and took on clients who were indigent, or whom other lawyers would not assist. Mr. Brockmeyer established a scholarship at the law school for evening students who needed financial assistance with tuition. In 1997, the law school student lounge was named for him.



He passed away peacefully on May 9, 2021, surrounded by his loving family.

An FBI File on Mencken

By Theodore Potthast

England was at war with Germany for two years before the USA became involved in both WWI and WWII. Mencken considered England to be the evil empire and he strongly supported Germany.

Henry L. Mencken was probably the most famous member in the history of the German Society of Maryland. He was the most widely read American journalist of the first half of the 20th century.

The FBI created a file on Mencken and an official of the Mencken Society, Oleg Panczenko obtained a copy of that file and published excerpts from it in the Mencken Society's newsletter.

An interesting item in the FBI file is correspondence between Mencken and an official of a college in Arkansas, which was a training institute for labor leaders, which its detractors said, "fosters communism and permits the teaching of un-American doctrines." Mencken wrote, "What is a Bolshevik College doing in Arkansas?...bring it to Maryland Free State and I'll give



you an unconditioned guarantee of free speech. You will be at liberty to teach spiritualism, vegetarianism, communism, Calvinism or cannibalism, or all of them together."

The Arkansas college apparently had low morals. Mencken wrote, "As for their fornication, where in this great Republic will you find complete chastity, certainly not here in Maryland. Adultery in

all its complicated and dreadful forms is rampant here...

The FBI file also contains the quote, 'I wrote a book against socialists as long ago as 1910 and have denounced them at least a thousand times since. They seem to me to be unmitigated idiots, but they have the same clear rights under American law, and I think it is very foolish to harass them.'

The FBI cleared Mencken's name of any anti-American sentiments and their file showed him to be a solid citizen.

To read more about Mencken and the Mencken House, which may be visited, see their website at www.mencken.org. You may also find him in the Arts section of www.germanmarylanders.org. To review the FBI files of Mr. Mencken, go to:

<https://vault.fbi.gov/Henry%20Louis%2018H.L.%29%20Mencken>.

KRIMSKRAM

German politicians call for eased COVID restrictions amid rising infection rates.

'The Local' (a German digital newspaper) reported that despite a rise in COVID cases, many area politicians are arguing that restrictions should be lifted.

The vaccines are readily available and even a few months ago, Germany reported that 58.2 percent of the German population had been given at least one dose of vaccine, while 42.1 were fully immunized.

"If everyone has received a complete vaccination offer and the vaccination protects against severe courses of Covid, including newer variants, we must gradually take our corona measures back," said Saarland's Prime Minister Tobias Hans (CDU) told Welt am Sonntag.

"As soon as every citizen has received a complete vaccination offer and the vaccination protection remains effective, the overall responsibility passes from the state back to the individual citizen," said Blume. "That means: if everyone is protected by vaccination, the period of restrictions for everyone ends. But we're not there yet."

Foreign Minister Heiko Maas (SPD) recently spoke out in favour of lifting all corona restrictions as soon as all people in Germany have received a vaccination offer. Maas expects this to happen sometime in August.

To Read more see: German politicians call for eased Covid restrictions amid rising infection rates - The Local. Check out additional articles at news@thelocal.de.

The Society for the History of Germans in Maryland's Report Spotlighted in German Life August issue.

The Report: A Journal of German-American History was a topic in Don Tolzmann's column in the August issue of German Life. Mr. Tolzmann recognized The Society, led by President Nick Fessenden, German Society member and husband of past president, Brigitte Fessenden, as the oldest German-American Historical Society in existence. The Society was founded in 1886. This particular Report #48, consists of articles that range from German culture in Baltimore to Friedrich Gerstacker, the German Travel writer. Mr. Tolzmann did zero in on the reprint of a lecture by Albert B. Faust that was presented in 1911 on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Society. Faust, described as 'the father of academic scholarship on German culture in America' then spoke on

the "Undercurrents of German Influence in Maryland". You can read more of the original at www.SHGM.org.

Word of the Season

A *Bratkartoffelverhaltis*, which literally means "fried potato relationship," is not about how much Germans love fried potatoes, but it is about finding a meal ticket.

"Er hat ein *Bratkartoffelverhaltis* mit ihr," essentially translates into "he only sees her because she feeds him." At the same time, "er sucht ein *Bratkartoffelverhaltis*" means "he's looking for a meal ticket."

According to some online sources, the origin of this expression dates back to the early 20th-century, World War I era, when short-term love affairs were entered into because one partner had better rations.

Today, it is more often than not used in Germany as a tongue-in-cheek, synonym for a "wilde Ehe" (wild marriage), referring to cohabitation without tying the knot.

Donations for the German Flood Victims

In July, multiple regions of Western and Southern Germany were severely affected by floods, which resulted in almost 200 deaths, and the complete destruction of homes and infrastructure. Many more people are still missing while over 750 people are injured. On July 26, more storms affected Southern Bavaria, further straining national, regional, and local resources.

Those interested in making donations may do so through the following organizations:

Aktion Deutschland Hilft: <https://www.aktion-deutschland-hilft.de/en/donate/donate/>

HELP e.V. - Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe (Focus is on Bonn/Rhein-Sieg, Ahrtal und Rhein-Erft-Kreis): <https://www.help-ev.de/>

Technisches Hilfswerk (You need to be able to make international transfers with an IBAN, as there is no online function.)

THW-Stiftung IBAN: DE23 3705 0198 1902 639093

See also the story of one of our members living in Germany and the destruction, on page 6.

October is German-American Heritage Month in Maryland

Of course we all know that October is German-American Heritage Month in Maryland. Legislation passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 2014 made this law. It was a long process and there were struggles in the making, but it passed and now it is OUR responsibility to remember and celebrate. 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.

Last year COVID put the damper on most activities, but your Society celebrated by posting daily a German Marylander and in the evenings throughout the month information about festivals, German orphanages or other contributions made by German Marylanders. The profiles used on our FB page are from www.GermanMarylanders.org and we are doing it again this year. This year there will be 30 new profiles, 44 postings in all.

I hope others share the posts and that families use them as a tool to discuss, not just the profiles, but YOUR family history and profiles. Hopefully this will spark an interest in the younger generation and they will gain insight on the trials and difficulties it was for their ancestors

| Date | Profile | Special Interest |
|----------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 10.1.21 | Henry Lightner | The German Society of Maryland |
| 10.2.21 | William Broening | |
| 10.3.21 | August Emrich | German Schools |
| 10.4.21 | Ann Schuler | |
| 10.5.21 | Edward Engelbert | Immigration Museum |
| 10.6.21 | German Brewing Company | |
| 10.7.21 | Trueth Butchers | |
| 10.8.21 | Miller Brothers Restaurant | |
| 10.9.21 | Otto DuBrau | |
| 10.10.21 | Muhly Bakery | Schifferstadt |
| 10.11.21 | John Neun | |
| 10.12.21 | Potthast Family | Hansa Haus |
| 10.13.21 | Eichenkranz Restaurant & Singers | Schützen Parks |
| 10.14.21 | William Rinehart | The German Festival |
| 10.15.21 | The German Singing Societies | |
| 10.16.21 | Henry Sonneborn | |
| 10.17.21 | John Hemmeter | Zion German Language School |
| 10.18.21 | Walter Elsasser | |
| 10.19.21 | St. Paul's Cemetery | Deutsches Haus |
| 10.20.21 | Julius Hofmann | |
| 10.21.21 | St. Joseph's German Hospital | Hager House |
| 10.22.21 | George Miltenberger | |
| 10.23.21 | Ernest Hoen | Deutsche Correspondent |
| 10.24.21 | Martini Lutheran Church | |
| 10.25.21 | Hildebrandt Family | |
| 10.26.21 | Alfred Zeller | German Orphanage |
| 10.27.21 | Edward Berge | |
| 10.28.21 | Darley Park | German Aged Home |
| 10.29.21 | Schoenlein, Gus | |
| 10.30.21 | Zion Church | |
| 10.31.21 | German Clubs with Contacts | |

to come to the United States. Share the pride, the culture and the history and make it a FAMILY affair.



GERMAN - AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH 2021 SEMINAR SERIES

PRESENTED BY THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND



The German Society of Maryland is pleased to announce that we will be offering a series of five different seminars on various dates to celebrate German-American Heritage Month.

2021 SEMINAR SERIES PRICING

| | MEMBER | NON-MEMBER |
|----------------|--------|------------|
| SINGLE SEMINAR | \$10 | \$20 |
| SET OF FIVE | \$35 | \$75 |

2021 SEMINAR SERIES REGISTRATION

To register for the 2021 Seminar Series, complete the attached registration form or visit <https://bit.ly/2S67Ahx> to complete the online registration form.

LOCATION DETAILS:

Baltimore Immigration Museum
1308 Beason Street
Baltimore, MD 21230
FREE PARKING

Evangelical Lutheran Church
35 E. Church Street
Frederick, MD 21701
CITY GARAGE PARKING

IIAMD Headquarters
2408 Peppermill Drive, Ste A
Glen Burnie, MD 21061
FREE PARKING

Natural History Society of MD
6908 Belair Road
Baltimore, MD 21206
FREE PARKING

Zion Church
400 E. Lexington Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
FREE PARKING

UPCOMING SEMINARS:

- **GERMAN MARYLANDERS**
Presented by: Shelley Arnold
October 2 | 1:00PM - 3:00PM | Zion Church

- **GERMAN MARYLANDERS**
Presented by: Shelley Arnold
October 5 | 7:00PM - 9:00PM | IIAMD Headquarters

- **THE STORY OF RUTH**
Presented by: Ilka Knüppel & Will Prunka
October 9 | 1:00PM - 3:00PM | Zion Church

- **THE STORY OF RUTH**
Presented by: Ilka Knüppel & Will Prunka
October 12 | 7:00PM - 9:00PM | Natural History Museum

- **GERMAN IMMIGRATION**
Presented by: Nick Fessenden
October 16 | 1:00PM - 2:30PM | Zion Church

- **GERMAN IMMIGRATION**
Presented by: Nick Fessenden
October 19 | 7:00PM - 8:30PM | Immigration Museum

- **CAPTIVES**
Presented by: Reiner Prochaska
October 23 | 1:00PM - 3:00PM | Zion Church

- **CAPTIVES**
Presented by: Reiner Prochaska
October 26 | 7:00PM - 9:00PM | Evangelical Lutheran Church

- **THE 'HAUNTING SIDE OF GERMANY'**
Presented by: Shelley Arnold
October 30 | 1:00PM - 2:30PM | Zion Church

VISIT GERMANSOCIETY-MD.COM TO BECOME A GSM MEMBER

GSM 2021 SEMINAR SERIES REGISTRATION

GSM 2021 Seminars:

Select your desired seminar(s). Please pay special attention to the locations and times of the seminars.

GERMAN MARYLANDERS
Presented by: Shelley Arnold
October 2 | 1:00PM - 3:00PM | Zion Church

GERMAN IMMIGRATION
Presented by: Nick Fessenden
October 19 | 7:00PM - 8:30PM | Immigration Museum

GERMAN MARYLANDERS
Presented by: Shelley Arnold
October 5 | 7:00PM - 9:00PM | IIAMD Headquarters

CAPTIVES
Presented by: Reiner Prochaska
October 23 | 1:00PM - 3:00PM | Zion Church

THE STORY OF RUTH
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October 30 | 1:00PM - 2:30PM | Zion Church

GERMAN IMMIGRATION
Presented by: Nick Fessenden
October 16 | 1:00PM - 2:30PM | Zion Church

Attendee Information:

Membership Status: GSM Member _____ Non-Member _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

I am enclosing: \$ _____ (see pricing on reverse)

Please make all checks payable to 'The German Society of Maryland' and send them to the address below along with a copy of your registration form.

If you would like to complete the online registration form and pay online visit <https://bit.ly/2S67Ahx>.

'Judenhof' in Speyer, named a UNESCO site, the first Jewish site in Germany

By Shelley Arnold

While taking our Big 50th Anniversary Cruise this past August, we had the opportunity to visit Speyer. Speyer is a beautiful little town with a Romanesque imperial cathedral (UNESCO World Heritage Site), burial place of eight emperors. Speyer was once a Celtic center that traded hands several times between the Romans and Huns. The term Protestant originated here at the Diet of Speyer in 1529, when 14 free cities of Germany and six Lutheran princes protested the Edict of Worms that banned the writings of Martin Luther.

But it wasn't that history that peaked my interest here, it was the fact that within this small city (population 50,378), along with Worms and Mainz, it was an important center of Ashkenazic Jewish spiritual life. Some of this history has been maintained such as the ruins of the 1104 synagogue and the ruins of Germany's oldest (c. 1126) mikva (photo below), a 33 foot deep ritual bath. This mikva is the oldest of its kind north of the Alps. There is also a SchPIRA Museum (Shapiro, the Jewish name, which derives from the variant name Speyer), which houses many of the remnants of the cemetery,



which had been moved and destroyed several times. The museum covers the three most important pillars of the Jewish community, the synagogue, the mikvah and the cemetery, the latter two which may still be visited.

The Jewish communities began building lives in Speyer in 1084, when invited by then Bishop Rüdiger Hutzmann. He gave the community a burial ground north of the town and allowed them to settle in the Altspeyer area. The community grew and prospered for more than 400 years. By the 14th century, however, the peace was marred by anti-Jewish sentiment. The community in Speyer came to a halt. The reason of the decline and extinction are not clearly understood, but in 1529, the municipal authorities were already using the Jewish house of worship as an arse-

nal. The synagogue was destroyed during the Palatine War of Succession in 1689. There are under 50 headstones that still exist, dating between 1112 and 1443.

Almost all of Speyer's remaining Jews were murdered during the Holocaust. In 1996 a resurgence began and many Jewish refugee families settled here. The new synagogue's cornerstone was laid in 2008.

We visited the 'Judenhof' in Speyer and learned that it had recently (July 27, 2021), been named a UNESCO site. The UNESCO committee recognized the German cities of Mainz, Speyer and Worms for their role as centers of the European Jewish culture in the Middle ages, the FIRST ever UNESCO recognition of Jewish cultural heritage in Germany.

The three cities, Mainz, Speyer and Worms are known as the SchUM sites — for the first letters of their medieval Hebrew names. The three cities form part of what was once referred to as "Jerusalem on the Rhine."

We were very happy to be able to visit at such an important time.



Gunther Memorial Service to be held September 26th

One of the missions of the German Society is to preserve the Maryland German-American heritage. Sgt. Henry

Nicholas Gunther is part of that heritage. He was the last soldier from any country killed in WWI. He was killed at 10:59 a.m. on November 11, 1918, about one minute before the Armistice was to take effect at 11:00 a.m. General John J. Pershing issued a proclamation commending his actions. He was buried near the site where he was killed in France. The French have erected a monument to him there.

Sgt. Gunther had lived on Eastern Avenue opposite Patterson



Park. There is a marker on his former home at 3011 Eastern Avenue. He was a clerk working for The Bank of Baltimore when he was drafted into the army.

He was a parishioner of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church a few blocks away from his home in Highlandtown.

Sgt. Gunther's remains were returned to Baltimore three years later. On September 26, 1921, 100 years ago, a funeral Mass was held for Sgt. Gunther at his parish, and immediately thereafter, he was taken to The Most Holy Redeemer Cemetery at Belair Road and Moravia Avenue. The German Society placed a memorial plaque at his grave on November

11, 2010. On that date in 2018, the German Society conducted a ceremony attended by over 100 of our members and friends to commemorate the 100th anniversary of his death.

On Sunday, September 26th, 2021, there will be a Mass at 9:30 AM at his parish church, The Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church, on 600 S. Conkling St, Baltimore, MD, 21224. Our membership and friends are invited to attend the Mass. At around 11 AM following the Mass, members may attend a brief ceremony at Sgt. Gunther's grave in Most Holy Redeemer Cemetery. We thank those who by attending help carry out our Society's obligation to preserve Maryland's German American Heritage.

SAVE THE DATE

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

The 237th Annual Society Banquet

Date: November 6, 2021
 Location: The Maryland Club-1 E Eager St, Baltimore, MD 21202
 Time: 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM

More details to follow!

Watch your email inbox and Facebook for more information!

The GSM congratulate all of the awardees this year for a job well done in not so perfect conditions. This year only two schools participated, but as you can see, the showing was strong.

AATG Chapter & German Society of Maryland Recognition of Student Achievement on the National German Exam

Students scoring at the 90th or above percentile

Level 4

Level 3

Level 2

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Maya Barney-Ferran (GLC) Ella Caldwell (GLC) Therese Delp (GLC) Kai Duenwald (GLC) Boroka Ferencz (GLC) Kai Hartmann (GLC) Milo Hartmann (GLC) Paul Heister (GLC) Sabrina Lussier (GLC) Lili Malatinszky (GLC) Emily Mann (GLC) Anna Marchler (GLC) Anya Olson (GLC) Hannah Otte (GLC) Kiara Pedra (GLC) Yasemin Tanyu (GLC) Sienna Valentina Montenegro (GLC) | Kai Behrens (GLC) Eliza Boniface (GLC) Naomi Breuer (GLC) Olivia Busey (GLC) Elizabeth Delp (GLC) Cecilia DeStefano (GLC) Maximilian Eller (GLC) Elliot Gobbert (GLC) Cristian Jimenez-Ebert (GLC) Mia Lattin (GLC) Edith Pellarini (GLC) Luka Porter (GLC) Christopher Roberts (GTP) Benjamin Schlotterer (GLC) Maxi Stumpf (GLC) Zachary Whipp (GTP) Finn Paul Woermer (GLC) | Kenga Antsilevich (GLC) Sebastian Diaz (GLC) Stephanie Grippando (GLC) Kathryn Schindler (GLC) Julius Torriero (GLC) Annika Von Conrad (GLC) Sasha Woodward (GLC) |
|--|--|---|

Students scoring between the 85th & 89th percentile

Level 4

Level 3

Level 2

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Conrad Decressin (GLC) Isabella Difilippantonio (GLC) Samantha Handrigan (GLC) | Kacy Horne (GLC) Amelie Pandit (GLC) Jacob Smeltzer (GLC) | Clara Hoffman (GLC) Andreas Torriero (GLC) Kai Wagner (GLC) |
|--|---|---|

Each student receives a Medal, a Certificate and a generous GSM monetary award.

GLC – German Language Courses at the German International School Washington, DC

GTP – Georgetown Preparatory School

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 german@germansociety-md.com and stating that you wish to become a student member. This is FREE. **NO ANNUAL DUES WITH VALID EMAIL ADDRESS!**

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:

Life- time Membership: \$250.00

Mail to:

The German Society of Maryland
2300 York Road, Suite 209
Timonium Maryland 21093

Dear Dr. Helinski, 05/08/2021
Thank you so much for awarding me the 2021 German Society of Maryland Merit Award for German Majors! I am very grateful to you and the other members of the scholarship committee. This award will greatly help me to achieve my educational and extra-curricular German goals, especially this summer when I conduct research in Mannheim. ☺
Best, Caroline Righ

April 29, 2021
President Shelley Arnold
2300 York Road
Suite 209
Timonium, MD 21092
Dear President Arnold,
I recently had the pleasure of receiving a German Society of Maryland scholarship for German Minors, and I wanted to send this brief note as thanks. It is my understanding that quite a few people applied for this, so I am honored that I was selected to receive it. I have long-enjoyed studying German, and to think that I have now even been granted some funding for this endeavor is very exciting. Please know that this will certainly be money well-spent, and it is helping me immensely.
Once again, thank you for this scholarship!
Best,
Adam Ratajczak

Two students send their thanks for the scholarships presented to them. Caroline was presented a scholarship for those that Major in German and Adam was presented a scholarship for those that Manor in German. You may read all of the college winners and their qualifications in the July issue, page 4.

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 This action alone saves paper and postage costs.

The Story of 'Silent Night'

The World Famous Christmas Carol celebrated its 200th Anniversary in 2018.

The song was composed in 1818 by Franz Gruber to lyrics that were written by Joseph Mohr in 1816. It was written in the small town of Oberndorf bei Salzburg, in Austria. It was first performed at St. Nicholas parish in Oberndorf in the small parish church, St. Nicholas. For many years the



lyrics were attributed to others such as Mozart or Haydn, however, an original manuscript was later discovered in Mohr's handwriting and dated as c. 1820. It stated that Mohr wrote the words in 1816 when he was assigned to a pilgrim church in Mariapfarr, Austria, and shows that the music was composed by Gruber in 1818. This is the earliest manuscript that exists and the only one in Mohr's handwriting.

Joseph Mohr was the pastor of the little church at the time and had only been there for one year. He had written the beautiful words to the carol in 1816. The tune, by Franz Gruber, then schoolmaster and organist in Arnsdorf, a town near Oberndorf, was written when Mohr requested him to write music for the lyrics, with a guitar accompaniment. Gruber needed something for the Christmas Eve service, as a flood had damaged the church organ. A later flood, in the 1890s actually made St. Nicholas Church unstable and it was demolished. In 1937 a small chapel was constructed and is visited by thousands each year to

commemorate where the world's most popular Christmas Carol was first heard.

It spread quickly throughout the world, first coming to the United States in 1839 when it was performed by a singing group known as the Rainers.

The song is so honored in Germany and Austria. Once while visiting Austria in mid-December, we asked a Männerchor to sing the song for us. They informed us that in Austria, it is not sung until Christmas Eve. They would not make any exceptions.

The beautiful words by Mohr:

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht,
Alles schläft; einsam wacht
Nur das traute hochheilige Paar.
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht,
Hirten erst kundgemacht
Durch der Engel Halleluja,
Tönt es laut von fern und nah:
Christ, der Retter ist da!
Christ, der Retter ist da!

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht,
Gottes Sohn, o wie lacht
Lieb' aus deinem göttlichen Mund,
Da uns schlägt die rettende Stund'.
Christ, in deiner Geburt!
Christ, in deiner Geburt!
Beautiful: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKvKMgR8H7k>



German Christmas Traditions

Glühwein is the traditional Christkindlmarkt 'warm up'. It is a mulled wine usually made with red wine and mulling spices. It is served hot and is, in most cases, what gets you through the bitter cold weather as you walk through the beautiful Christmas Markets of Germany.

As an added bonus, Glühwein is served in a Glühwein mug that usually advertises the year and the town. Just about every

town, big and small, have Glühwein mugs. You pay a deposit on the mugs and if you do not want to keep them... (I have kept all of mine), you get your deposit back when you return the mug.

In the past few years some areas have begun making a 'white' Glühwein and last year we had the good fortune to find a Blueberry Glühwein. All are served hot...it is the best. Glühwein and/or also the spice bags are sold in local stores.

Glühwein Recipe

¾ cup water
¾ cup white sugar
1 cinnamon stick
1 orange
10 whole cloves
1 bottle red wine



In a saucepan, combine the water, sugar, and cinnamon stick. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer. Add cloves, cinnamon (can also add anise). Cut the orange in half, and squeeze the juice into the simmering water. Push the cloves into the outside of the orange peel, and place peel in the simmering water. Continue simmering for 30 minutes, until thick and syrupy. Never boil. Reduce heat and add wine. Let it barely simmer. Remove orange halves. Strain and Serve hot in mugs or glasses that have been preheated in warm water (cold glasses will break.). You can also add rum or amaretto. Prep time about 10 minutes. Cook time about 30

Christmas Angels (Weihnachtsengel)

I am sure you have heard of the Nürnberger Angel, the Angel and the Miner and the Rauschgoldengel, so you know how important angels are to German Christmas traditions.

Christmas angels are the most loved Christmas ornaments in Germany. They are put up on

Christmas trees and all around the house at Christmas time. The Christmas angels are most commonly made of wood and are often seen playing their musical instruments. There are very special musician angels made by Wendt & Kuhn and Blank in Seiffen. They are big collectors

items. Expect to see thousands of these in any Christmas market in Germany.

They are very important here at home too, how many top their Christmas tree with the Angel?



Sternsingers

On January 5th or 6th the eve of the feast of the Epiphany, or on Epiphany Day itself, many Christians (including Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics, among others) chalk their doors with a pattern: "21 † C † M † B † 21", with the numbers referring "to the calendar year for

this upcoming year, 2021); the crosses stand for Christ; and the letters have a two-fold significance: C, M and B are the initials for the traditional names of the Magi (Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar), but they are also an abbreviation of the Latin blessing *Christus mansionem benedicat*,

which means, May Christ bless this house.

The day groups of children go caroling dressed as the Magi. They carry a Star Staff and are known as the Star Singers (*Sternsingers*). The children greet the owners of the home with a blessing and mark the door.

This custom has

been around for hundreds of years, however after WWII it became an organized event and fundraiser, the funds going to help rebuild Germany and later to help children around the world. Their motto is "Segen bringen, segen sein" or "Bring blessings, be a blessing".

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Lynette Dean

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

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

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*Please submit articles or items of interest to
Shelley Arnold, Editor at bsarnold7@gmail.com*

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www.germansociety-md.com

Dr. Maureen Helinski,
Webmaster



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