I just want to take this opportunity to invite you to attend our 2016 Annual Symposium, April 28-30, in San Antonio. While you probably know that the city offers the top two tourist attractions in Texas, the Alamo and Riverwalk (both only a ten-minute stroll from our conference hotel, the Marriott Plaza, South Alamo), you may not realize what a German presence the Alamo City once had. Our meeting space will actually be within the venerable limestone walls of the former San Antonio German English School. Besides the Alamo and River Walk, we’ll be just across the street from Hemisfair Park where the Institute of Texas Cultures is located, with an extensive exhibit on Germans and on every other group that settled the Lone Star State. Hardly five minutes’ walk from the Marriott is St. Joseph’s Catholic Church, the oldest German parish in the city established in 1868, and Sunday, May 1, is the annual festival of the parish, with the San Antonio Maennerchor singing in German.

Those of you from the Frost Belt should especially enjoy Texas at that time of year, with bluebonnets and Indian paintbrush blooming all over. If you can find the time on Sunday, you may want to drive 40 miles to New Braunfels, or 70 miles in the opposite direction to Fredericksburg, or to the Texas German living history farm at the edge of the LBJ Ranch, where you still may encounter some native speakers of German. Hope to see y’all (“Euch” auf Deutsch) there.

Walter D. Kamphoefner
President
GERMAN AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP AWARD: Denis Warta

New Ulm residents Denis Warta and George Glotzbach recently received the German American Friendship Award on October 8th in Chicago from Consul General Herbert Quelle. Acting as German Cultural Ambassadors, Warta and Glotzbach serve as honorary tour guides for visitors from Germany. They have been active in promoting German-American culture in New Ulm for over a quarter of a century.

Adapted from the New Ulm Journal, October 20, 2015

2016 SGAS MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

I would like to thank all of you who have now paid your SGAS memberships for 2016. I know that renewing memberships before the end of the current year is a somewhat new policy for SGAS, and you may be thinking, “But I just paid!” However, we need to be able to more accurately predict the number of Yearbooks to be printed in the spring, and we ran into some difficulty with that last year. Your cooperation as we make this change is much appreciated. DANKE!

- Karyl Rommelfanger, Membership Chair

A Huge Thank You For Your Donations!

We would like to extend our most sincere gratitude to the following people who generously donated to SGAS in 2014:

Barbara Becker-Cantarino  Beatrice Hulsberg  Maria Sturm
Charles Birnstiel  Edward Lanwermeyer  Frank Trommler
Edward G. Fichtner  Dennis Kruse  Kurt Mueller-Vollmer
Wolf D. & Anne Marie Fuhrig  Brigitte Malm  Cecile Zorach
Clara H. Harsh  Dr. Eric J. Schmaltz
NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Todd Barnett

Todd Barnett is a PhD candidate at the University of Missouri. His research focus is on American immigration, business, religious, and urban history in the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era. Since 2011, he has served as the James W. Goodrich Research Fellow at the State Historical Society of Missouri.

Todd’s dissertation is a historical biography of Adolphus Busch, cofounder of the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Association (now Anheuser-Busch InBev, the largest brewing company in the world). Todd recently completed a five-month research trip that took him all over the country, including Washington, D.C., and various cities in Louisiana, Texas, Wisconsin, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois. During the trip, he made a stop at the Hotel Adolphus in Dallas (opened by Busch in 1912), where he was given permission to take pictures throughout the building. Last summer, he conducted research in various German cities, and was the first historian allowed to utilize the historical resources and freely roam the grounds at Villa Lily, Busch’s sprawling estate in Bad Schwalbach.

At the 2014 Society for German-American Studies Symposium in Milwaukee, Todd presented a paper titled, “From Anheuser to Busch, the Partnership of Eberhard Anheuser and Adolphus Busch,” in which he described the unique backstory of the formation of the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Association. In the 2015 symposium held in St. Louis, he presented a paper titled, “More Than Beer: the Diverse Investments of Adolphus Busch,” in which he revealed the connections between Busch’s various investments outside of the brewing industry, including the relationship between his diesel engine company and his plans to create a natural gas empire throughout the lower Mississippi Valley. Since Busch controlled a large portion of the Texas brewing industry, Todd is planning on submitting a paper for the 2016 symposium in San Antonio.

MAX KADE INSTITUTE SYMPOSIUM, OCTOBER 8 -10

Outside the Kaiserreich: The German Diaspora in the World War I Era

At a time when centennial commemorations of the events of World War I abound, the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison held a three-day international symposium, October 8–10, 2015, that focused on societies with German populations on the periphery of or outside the borders of the German Empire. The program included a new exhibit entitled “In Their Own Words: German Americans in the World War I Era.” Drawing on the resources of the MKI Library and Archives, it offered a glimpse of German-Americans’ concerns and attitude during this pivotal period.

The well-attended symposium began with a keynote address by Werner Sollors, the Henry B. and Anne M. Cabot Research Professor of English at Harvard University: Imperial Germany as a Country of Emigration and Immigration. It was followed by presentations on the German-American experience (Walter Kamphoefner); disunity among the German Americans (Cora Lee Kluge), Germans in Detroit (Felecia Lucht); German classical music in America (Pamela Potter); the Germanness of British and American Jews (Sarah Panter), enemy alien internment camps in the British Empire (Stefan Manz); writings on China by German POWs in Japanese camps (Weija Li); the multi-national Polish city of Łódź (Winson Chu); Germans and Danes in Schleswig-Holstein (Julie Allen); the fate of four Hutterite conscientious objectors from North Dakota (Duane Stoltzfus), and the situation of a distinctly old-stock American group, the Pennsylvania Dutch (Mark Louden).

With a topic as broad and complex as “The German Diaspora in the World War I Era,” the symposium could only scratch the surface, highlight issues, ask questions, and provide an impetus for further research and discussion. Judging by the audience’s participation and the lively conversations following the presentations, the event was a great success.

Submitted by Antje Petty, MKI Assistant Director
German Americans are not exactly the first thing you think of when you hear the name San Antonio, or vice versa; the name itself betrays its Hispanic origins. However, even as a tourist wandering around Alamo Square, you might bump into the Menger Hotel almost next door. It was founded by immigrant brewer William Menger in 1858, and is still a classic three-star address. On the back side of the same block, you might discover St. Joseph’s Catholic Church, established in 1868 and now surrounded on three sides by what was once Joske’s department store (founded by German-Jewish immigrants), after its hardheaded German parishioners in 1945 voted unanimously against selling to make way for the store’s expansion. Not only is the cornerstone written in German, it is still graced inside by stations of the cross in German language and Fraktur type, and stained glass windows imported from Munich in 1902. On the fourth Sunday of every month, the San Antonio Liederkranz sings in German and Latin. And that is just the tip of the iceberg.

A short walk west on Commerce Street from the church brings you to a bridge over the San Antonio River, which was there long before River Walk passed under it. Poet Sydney Lanier came to San Antonio in 1872, residing at the Menger Hotel, and recorded his impressions of the Alamo City in an essay. He was particularly amused by the trilingual sign-board posted at the Commerce Street Bridge, warning:

Walk your horse over the bridge, or you will be fined. Schnelles Reiten über diese Brücke ist verboten. Anda despacio con su caballo, o teme la ley.

From the time of Texas statehood in 1845 down to the end of the 19th century, San Antonio presented a colorful patchwork of cultures and languages. Newly-arrived miller Carl Hilmar Guenther wrote back to Germany already in 1859, reporting on his two-and-a-half-year-old son: “Fritz speaks very distinctly, but occasionally mixes Spanish, German, and English all together.” A few years later, young Fritz and all seven of his brothers and sisters attended a school just a couple of blocks down from the bridge on South Alamo Street, the San Antonio German English School, where they could be instructed in all three languages.

San Antonio German English School Pupils, ca. 1889

Founded in 1858 with the cornerstone for its building laid on Schiller’s 100th birthday in 1859, the School offered its 200-300 pupils a two-way immersion program, with the German and English languages enjoying equal and prominent places in the school curriculum. But it also provided Spanish instruction, albeit taught by Germans. Students of non-German background consistently made up about one-fifth of the pupils. In 1880, parents of a half dozen students were Mexican, including the Mexican consul, while eight families with about 25 pupils were unmistakably Anglo-American. Although German-speaking immigrants and their children made up one quarter of San Antonio’s 20,000 inhabitants in 1880, only two of the school’s pupils by then were German immigrants; the rest all American-born.
Declining immigration and an economic depression caused the school to close in 1897, but its two-story limestone building still survives in its latest incarnation as the meeting rooms of the Marriott Plaza, where the 2016 SGAS conference will be held (more details then).

Practically across the street from the school stands the Beethoven Hall, now housing the Magic Theater. It was the second concert hall of the Beethoven Männerchor, erected in 1913 after their original building burned down. One of the founders of the Männerchor (and also of the German English School), was William Carl August Thielepape. He was the first to raise the Stars and Stripes again over the Alamo in 1865, and was appointed mayor by the Union troops who occupied the city. The new hall was designed by prominent San Antonio architect Leo M. J. Dielmann, whose parents both immigrated from Germany. The name remained even though the Männerchor sold its concert hall in 1920 and purchased the new location at just off South Alamo Street at 422 Pereida, on the edge of the historic King William District, where it still holds rehearsals and concerts. It features a gemütliche beer garden shaded by stately pecan trees, and an indoor hall and barroom decorated with Männerchor memorabilia, much of it still captioned in German well into the 1940s.

Extending southwest from there to the San Antonio River, along what was once known as “Sauerkraut Bend”, is the King William Historical District, where the elite of German San Antonio congregated in the late nineteenth century. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, and many of its imposing dwellings have been restored. Its name commemorates the Prussian king Wilhelm I, to whom immigrant Ernst Hermann Altgelt dedicated the street when he located there in 1866. It was briefly renamed Pershing Avenue as a repercussion of World War I, but soon reverted to its original designation. The neighborhood was never an exclusive enclave, but did attract many prominent Germans, among them banker Carl Wilhelm August Gross, alderman and lumber merchant Edward Steves, pharmacist and industrialist George Henry Kalteyer, merchant and Park Commissioner Anton Wulf, and dry good merchant Alexander Joske. At the edge of the King William District just across the San
AN DAS PUBLIKUM!
By Steven Schmidt, Indiana State Library

‘To The Public’ was the headline of the very first issue of the Indiana Tribüne when it appeared on August 17, 1878. Publisher Louis P. Hild decided to bring out a German language newspaper in Indiana to provide support for the Republican candidates in the election of 1878. He pledged to support the party not with the “fanaticism that characterizes of a blind party supporter,” but with judiciousness, so that “one’s own errors do not become virtues of the opponent.” Despite the publisher’s grand plans, his paper did not add much weight to the election that fall. Six Democrats and one Greenback candidate compared to only five Republicans won congressional seats.

You can now read about their campaigns, their victories, and their losses, as well as other local and world news in the Hoosier State Chronicles, http://hoosierstatechronicles.org. In May, the Chronicles added an additional twenty years’ worth of the Indiana Tribüne to its existing collection. The Hoosier State Chronicles is Indiana’s free online portal for the state’s historic newspapers and offers free access to high quality images of historic Indiana newspapers.

The papers published between 1840 and 1923 come from all parts of the state—from large cities to small towns. Users can search using keywords, view the articles online, and download or print the pages. As of this writing, the website contains 37,180 issues from about sixty titles, for a total of 257,983 pages. This number continues to grow rapidly and will most likely surpass 750,000 pages by the end of the year. Of that, 8,229 issues starting from August 17, 1878 – March 2, 1907, are from the Indiana Tribüne. This will establish it as one of the largest collections of digitized historic German language newspapers in the country.

Below a small excerpt from the introductory comments of publisher Louis P. Hild taken from the Indiana Tribüne shown above, Volume 1, Number 1, auf Deutsch:

Don Yoder, “Dean” of Pennsylvania German Folklife

1921-2015

Don Yoder died at the age of 93 on August 11, 2015, in Devon, Pennsylvania. He was devoted to the history and culture of Pennsylvania, especially the folkways of the Pennsylvania Dutch. Don was Professor Emeritus of Folklife Studies, Religious Studies, and American Studies at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, where he taught for forty years (1956-96) and directed some 60 doctoral dissertations. He earned his Ph.D. in Religious Studies at the University of Chicago in 1947. After teaching at Union Theological Seminary and Muhlenberg College, Don taught at Franklin & Marshall College for several years before joining the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania in 1956.

In 1949, Don co-founded the Pennsylvania Dutch Folklife Center at Franklin & Marshall College with Alfred L. Shoemaker and J. William Frey, which later became the Pennsylvania Folklife Society. In the same year, they initiated the journal The Pennsylvania Dutchman—later renamed Pennsylvania Folklife—for which Don served as either co-editor or editor for some three decades. After his arrival at the University of Pennsylvania, he was instrumental in establishing the first folklife studies program in the United States. Don is, indeed, the father of the notion of “folklife” as a field for scholarly study. He defined it in his 1974 essay published in Pennsylvania Folklife: “The term ‘folklife’ . . . means the total range of traditional culture as researchable in the regional or ethnic contexts” with a particular emphasis on the activities of daily life.

Don was an early member of the Society for German-American Studies and served from 1984 until 1996 on the Editorial Board of the Yearbook of German-American Studies. His insightful as well as helpful critiques of essays made a significant contribution to the quality of our publication and the scholarship of our authors. At our 12th Symposium at Millersville University of Pennsylvania in 1988, Don gave the keynote address entitled “The ‘Dutchman’ and ‘Deitschlenner’: The New World Confronts the Old.” This author vividly recalls the impact that Don’s clear and concise analysis had for our understanding of that issue. The editors were very pleased to publish Don’s keynote address in the Yearbook of German-American Studies 23 (1988): 1-17. The Society also honored Don for his many contributions to German-American Studies with its Outstanding Achievement Award, presented during that 1988 Symposium held in Millersville, Pennsylvania.

-William D. Keel
By Steven Schmidt, Indiana State Library

Louis P. Hild decided to bring out a German language newspaper in Indiana to provide support for the Republican

Looking ahead to St. Louis, cont’d.

By Jesse Bogan

Religious Studies at the University of Chicago in 1947.

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Muhlenberg College, Don taught at Franklin & Marshall

College for several years before joining the faculty of

April 10, 2015 12:00 am...