

THE JOURNAL



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1.866.482.GTHS (4847)

THE JOURNAL
OF THE GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY
VOLUME XXIII, NUMBER 2, SUMMER 2001

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Frances Heimer Copeland, Charles Kalteyer, Cres Merrell, and Ann Suifenbergen

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PRESIDENT'S NOTES
by Karl Micklitz, GTHS President

At the Waco convention this spring we re-elected two Board members for four year terms beginning in 2002. Dr. Meredith McClain is a German professor at Texas Tech University in Lubbock. Dr. Terry Smart, a professor at Trinity University in San Antonio, is editor of the Journal. Both have been valuable members. We also elected two new members. Daniel Schoppe from Arlington will replace Esther Miller Strange from Kerrville, who resigned her position. Daniel's position became effective immediately. The replacement elected to replace Helga von Schweinitz is Dr. Hubert Heinen from Austin. His term will begin in 2002.

The Board of Directors also accepted the resignation of Ingrid Brock as Secretary of the society, effective at the end of this year, and then voted to replace her with Theodora (Teddy) Boehm from Brenham.

I appreciate the devoted efforts of all Board members in keeping the organization going. As you can see, we have a widely diverse group from all corners of Texas, and it has been my pleasure to serve with all of them.

Auf Wiedersehen !

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

By Julia Germany

As your new Executive Director, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for entrusting me with the success of this noble organization.

We are very grateful to have a German Consul General in Texas, and even more excited that he has personally taken an active role in promoting our heritage. In late spring, the German government sent a delegation to the U.S. to meet with students studying abroad. One of their stops included Austin, and our Consul General immediately thought of including the German Free School on their itinerary of "must-sees." This was the first trip to Texas for the members of the Eldersrat, and none of them were previously aware of the incredible contributions made in Texas by German emigrants. The group spent nearly 2 hours with us asking questions and learning about our goals and heritage. This fall, two of our board members will be in Berlin and will meet with at least one of these German delegates in an effort to continue a dialog between our two groups.

When I came to the GTHS, I quickly learned that the Guild members are the worker bees for the Old German Free School, and that without them this place would be falling down around itself. I would like to take a moment to highlight one member who has gone way beyond the call of membership to make a difference — Mr. Charles Clinger. Mr. Clinger responded to my call for help when I took on the challenge of turning the downstairs space into livable space, as opposed to storage space. He hauled off a ton of junk to the dump and materials to the recycling center then painted the place in time for Maifest. Without his help, there is no way we would have what today is turning into a fantastic library resource for our members. And to top it all off, he bought and hung the German, Texan, and American flags just in time for July 4th ! Mr. Clinger, you're my hero ! Mark your calendar for German-American Day, Saturday, October 6th, when we will host our Texas Historical Marker dedication ceremony. GTHS member and descendant of the first teacher at the German Free School, Anita Johnson, is proud of her German-Texan roots and graciously donated her time and money to making this marker a reality. And to all you folks out there who want the hands-on experience of preserving a structure and heritage that is more than 140 years old, become a Guild member. We are starting a summer renovation project that will make the German Free School shine at its marker dedication ceremony in October.

We have a new toll free phone number 1-866-482-GTHS (4847). Dr. Bette Edwards, a GTHS member in Houston, recognized our need for a toll-free phone number and has generously offered to underwrite the costs. We have new hours. Starting July 1st we are open to the public every Thursday 1 – 7 pm with the Stammtisch meeting 12 – 1 pm. In addition, we will be open every 1st and 3rd Saturday 10 am – 2 pm.

I am willing to bet that you know someone who shares your interest in German-Texan heritage who is not a member of the GTHS. In order for us to be a thriving and statewide organization, we need a thriving and statewide membership. At least three times per week I get a call from someone who found us by accident. I am gearing up for a serious marketing campaign to increase our membership. However, nothing is more effective than testimonials. Therefore, I am making a member challenge: the GTHS member who recruits the most new members by the time we go to press with the next issue of the Journal will receive a one-year GTHS membership extension. The runner up will receive a GTHS T-shirt and for the 2nd runner up, a four-color GTHS coffee mug.

Good luck and have a great summer, Julia

LEAVE YOUR GERMAN MARK

By Rodney C. Koenig
Former GTHS President (phone 713-651-5333)

Those of us in the Houston Galveston area will remember a tropical storm Allison which flooded large portions of Houston starting the weekend of June 8, 2001. Such storm left its wet mark on the southeast portion of Texas with up to 36 inches of rain and a number of drowning fatalities. Portions of Interstate 10 and Highway U.S. 29 were completely inundated. The tropical storm Allison left its mark on southeast Texas.

It is with sadness that I write of an individual who has truly left her German mark. Leola Kiel Tiedt, who was born July 15, 1907 in Carmine, Texas died in La Grange, Texas on May 16, 2001. She is buried at Florida Chapel Cemetery just outside Round Top, Texas. German Texan Heritage Society members recall that she served as historian and scrapbook editor for the GTHS Journal for a number of years. We also remember her clever wit and cheerful disposition. Leola was a retired teacher and retired principal. She taught school from 1925 to 1978 and was principal for the Round Top – Carmine Independent School District for 17 years. We remember her book titled "Oldenburg, Wo Bist Du?". I remember seeing the August 14, 1985 issue of the German magazine, Geo, which was a special about the Germans in Texas. In speaking of Leola, such article said "Sie wurde Lehrerin und war es mit Leib und Seele 53 Jahre lang." I personally remember Leola as a person from my hometown who ran the skit at the GTHS convention near Industry where she had a number of us playing parts in the German version of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. I also recall seeing Leola's tombstone, which was prepared well before her death in which the caption under her name states "She finally quit talking" and the caption under her husband, Otto Tiedt's name, says "Rest in peace". Otto predeceased Leola in 1999. Her son, L. O. Tiedt, also died prior to Leola's death. She leaves surviving her three grandchildren, Mark Tiedt, Barry Tiedt and Sharon Tiedt Gabriel, as well as great grandchildren. Leola Tiedt was never boring and was a joy to know! Our society, in particular, owes a tremendous amount to Leola. I hope that each of the readers will join me in making a memorial gift to GTHS in memory of Leola Kiel Tiedt.

Obviously, the best way we can leave our German mark is leading by example as Leola Kiel Tiedt has done. We encourage all of our members to discuss their German heritage with their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. If you have not already done so, record the names of your German ancestors with their birth dates, place of birth, place and date of death and place of origin in Germany. Recently, I saw that Gladys King DeWalch, who was born May 20, 1907, to Lillie Schuhmacher King, died on June 3, 2001. She apparently was the oldest living survivor of the Schuhmacher family that came to Texas in 1846 from Koblenz, Germany. While I had known of the Schuhmacher family, who founded one of the banks in La Grange, I was not aware of their origin in Germany. In addition to recording such items in announcements about reunions and obituaries, consider leaving part of your monetary wealth in your Will to GTHS or to universities and high schools for German scholarships. Designate GTHS as a beneficiary on your IRA, 403(b) plan or 401(k) plan. For further information regarding ways in which you can leave your German mark, call Rodney C. Koenig at 713-651-5333, or email me at rkoenig@fulbright.com or call Julia Germany at the GTHS office in Austin, Texas.

RECENT EVENTS AND NEWS

ANNUAL MEETING PLANNED FOR 2002

At its June 2nd meeting, the GTHS Board of Directors agreed to accept an invitation from the Texas German Society to join TGS in planning a shared annual meeting for both societies in March of 2002 at Shelby in Austin County, the area of the first permanent German settlements in Texas.

ATTENDANCE AT THE 2001 ANNUAL MEETING IN WACO

Van Massirer served as Chair of the first joint convention of the TGHS and Texas German Society held at Waco in April of 2001. Thanks, Van! He reported a total of 350 persons registered for the convention. Of these, 48% were TGS members; 20% were GTHS members; 13% were members of both organizations; and 19% of the attendees were non-members.

GERMAN FREE SCHOOL GUILD OFFICERS AND BOARD FOR 2001

The German Free School Guild has announced its officers and board members for the year 2001: President: Ewing "Wing" Evans; President-Elect: Hubert Heinen; Secretary: Margaret Hitzfeld; Building Facilities: Charles Clinger; Communications: Richard "Joe" Burges III; Education: Helga von Schweinitz; Historian: Dr. Marie Shultz; Hospitality: Muriel Vaughan; Landscape: Phil Koepp; Library: Ursula Heinen; Operational Fund Development: Charles "Chuck" Kalteyer; Special Events: Ewing "Wing" Evans; Volunteer Operations: Arlene Burges

INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL AT AUSTIN

At its meeting on June 21, the Board of the German Free School Guild unanimously agreed to participate in the Seventh International Children's Festival to be held in Austin at the Palmer Auditorium on October 13, 2001. This annual event is hosted by the Austin Children's Museum to share with visitors the traditions and crafts of the diverse cultures in Texas. At last year's festival, twenty-eight cultures were represented. This year 3,000 people are expected to attend.

NEW TOLL FREE NUMBER FOR THE GTHS OFFICE

Thanks to a gift from Dr. Betty J. Edwards of Houston, you now can phone the GTHS office in Austin toll-free at 1-866-482-4847 (1-866-482-GTHS). For Austin residents the local number remains 482-0927. Thanks, Betty!

TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR 2001

The Texas German Society's officers and directors for 2001 are: President: Dorothy Leyendecker of Columbus; 1st Vice President: Van Massirer of Crawford; 2nd Vice President: Marie Gottfried of Brookshire; Secretary: Gladys Arnold of Victoria; Treasurer: Christa Prewitt of Elgin; Program Director: Ursula Broussard of Victoria; Publicity Director: Glenn Guettler of Houston; Newsletter Editor: Flora von Roeder of Houston; Past President: Joycine Hanath of Chappell Hill; Directors: Andrew Blaschke of McDade, Mary Ordner of New Ulm, Harvey Spies of Victoria, Gudrun Sundquist of Spring and Dolores Taylor of Galveston.

NEED A TRAVEL COMPANION FOR TRIP TO GERMANY ?

A New Braunfels resident traveling alone to Germany would like to join one to three other women to tour and/or do family research. For information contact Julia Germany at the GTHS Office in Austin. Call toll-free 1-866-482-4847.

UNJUST TREATMENT OF GERMAN-AMERICANS IN WORLD WAR II

Bert Lachner of Glen Ellyn, Illinois, is seeking information from German-Americans who suffered unjust treatment by the U.S. Government during World War II or who know of relatives unfairly treated because of their German ancestry. This is in conjunction with a bill prepared for Congress by Senator Russell Feingold of Wisconsin which seeks appointment of a commission to determine facts of abuse, internment and other atrocities against German-Americans by our wartime government. If you wish to offer information or learn more about this, contact Bert Lachner at Landmark Books Unlimited, 389 Duane Street, Suite 302, Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137-4389; toll free telephone 1-800-522-4637.

HIGH SCHOOL CULTURAL EXCHANGES WITH GERMAN STUDENTS

Cathy Weidmann of Weidmann Specialty Tours in Fredericksburg hopes to assist a high school principal in Boppard, Germany, who wants to arrange student exchanges with a school in the U.S. In previous years, students from Boppard have visited Texas for two weeks during their school vacations in October and April, and American students have visited Germany. If you know of a Texas school that might participate in this cultural exchange program, contact Cathy Weidmann at Weidmann Speciality Tours, 204 North Acorn Street, Fredericksburg, Texas 78624; toll free telephone 1-866-340-2216.

DEDICATION OF GERMAN FREE SCHOOL HISTORICAL MARKER

Julia Germany, GTHS Executive Director, announced the dedication ceremony for the German Free School Historical Marker will be Saturday, October 6, 2001 (German-American Day). The German Free School was built in 1857 by German immigrants and already is recognized by the State of Texas as an historical landmark. Now our building at 507 East 10th Street will have a permanent marker telling its history, thanks to a generous gift from Anita Johnson which will pay the production cost of the marker. Thanks, Anita!

ANNUAL MAIFEST AT THE GERMAN FREE SCHOOL

The Guild of the German Free School in Austin held its annual MaiFest on the grounds of the school on Sunday, April 29, 2001, from 3 to 7 pm. It offered visitors an afternoon of German food, beer, music and singing.

KARL MAY BOOKS IN THE GTHS LIBRARY

Helga von Schweinitz reported that GTHS has sixty Karl May books in its Karl Trenckmann Library at the German Free School in Austin. Most were donated by Swiss-born Dr. Walter Ducloux and his widow, Gina Ducloux. One book from the Manfred Holck estate entitled Babel und Bibel is a rare volume valued at \$400. Other donors gave GTHS additional "Karl Mays" which they carried with them when they immigrated to the US. May was the 19th century German author whose stories about an "Indian" named Winnetou shaped the early image of Texas in the mind of many Germans.

GERMAN-TEXANS AND GTHS IN GERMAN LANGUAGE MAGAZINE

Julia Germany reported that the March 2001 issue of Damals (magazine) included a long, interesting article in German titled "Der Traum von Neu-Deutschland" about Germans who came to Texas in the 1840s. GTHS gets mention at the end of the article.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to assist in preparing the surname index for last year's journals. If you can volunteer some time to help, phone Julia Germany at the GTHS Office in Austin: toll-free 1-866-482-4847

GTHS MEMBER PRESENTS PROGRAMS FOR ELDERHOSTELS

GTHS member Theresa Gold of San Antonio reported that during the Spring of this year she presented a series of lectures with slides to Elderhostel participants visiting San Antonio. Her program entitled "German Influences in San Antonio" was especially popular with visitors. Julia's other presentations included one on German-Texans.

THE ANNUAL OPERATIONAL FUND DRIVE A SUCCESS

Charles "Chuck" Kalteyer of Austin, member of the GTHS Board of Directors, headed last year's campaign to raise donations for the GTHS Operational Fund. Charles reported to the June board meeting that the total contributions for the fund had gone over the \$20,000 goal! More than 275 GTHS members made contributions, including all members of the Board of Directors.

GTHS BOARD MEMBER APPOINTED HONORARY GERMAN CONSUL

Ben Buecker of San Antonio, a member of the Board of Directors, in March 2001 was appointed the Honorary German Consul for Central Texas. See story on this elsewhere in this edition of the journal.

GTHS BOARD MEMBER TO RECEIVE THE LUCIUS CLAY MEDAL

Dr. Meredith McClain of Lubbock, a member of the Board of Directors, has been named the 2001 recipient of the prestigious Lucius Clay Medal. See the story elsewhere in this edition of the journal.

GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2001

Below L to R Front Row: Helga von Schweinitz, Bette Williams (Treasurer), Judge Karl Micklitz (President), Ingrid Brock (Secretary). L to R Back Row: Charles Kalteyer, Ewing "Wing" Evans (GFS Guild President), Ben Buecker, Dr. Terry Smart (Journal Editor), Theodora Boehm, Dr. James Feuge, Janice Thompson, Van Massirer, Julia Germany (Executive Director), and Dr. R. A. Neely. Not pictured: Frances Heimer Copeland (Vice President), Dr. Meredith McClain, and Daniel Schoppe.



DR. MEREDITH McCLAIN TO RECEIVE THE LUCIUS D. CLAY MEDAL

Dr. Meredith McClain, member of the German-Texan Heritage Society's Board of Directors, has been selected this year's recipient of the Lucius D. Clay Medal awarded by the *Verband Der Deutsch-Amerikanischen Clubs*/Federation of German-American Clubs. This prestigious award was established in 1980 in memory of General Lucius Clay, a deputy to General Dwight Eisenhower 1945-1947, military governor of the U.S. zone of occupied Germany 1947-49, an initiator of the Berlin Airlift, and advisor on Berlin to President Kennedy 1961-1962.

The round, silver medal Dr. McClain will receive is minted with a portrait of General Clay and inscribed "For outstanding contribution to German American friendship." The presentation will be made October 6, 2001, in Dusseldorf on German-American Day, during ceremonies attended by a large group of dignitaries from both nations.

Dr. McClain joins a distinguished group of former recipients of this award, among whom are a President of the Federal Republic of Germany, a member of the United States Congress, a U.S. ambassador to Germany, a German foreign minister, the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, and many other outstanding individuals.

The following is a copy of the letter sent to Dr. McClain notifying her of her selection for this honor.

Prof. Dr. Meredith McClain
German Language Department
Texas Tech University
Lubbock, Texas 79409
USA

Kaiserslautern, 19. March 2001

Dear Prof. Dr. McClain

The Wilhelmshaven/Friesland German American Association has nominated you as recipient of the Lucius D. Clay Medal. The board of the Federation has accepted your nomination with great pleasure. The award will be presented to you on October 6, 2001 in Düsseldorf, Germany, at the "Rhein Terrasse."

There will be a festive ceremony during the celebration of the German-American Day. Participants will be high ranking politicians, diplomats and officers from the United States and Germany, leading business people, professors from various universities of both countries, representatives of the Federation memberclubs, and the Federation exchange students as well as representatives from the Federation's Youth work.

The Lucius D. Clay Medal is the highest award the Federation is presenting to Germans or Americans who contribute in a special way in initiating and deepening the German American relations and friendship. Former recipients were the US ambassador in Germany, General Vernon A. Walter, and the long time coordinator of the Federal Government of Germany for German-American relations, Prof. Dr. Peter Weidenfels, etc.

You, Prof. Dr. McClain, will be honored for initiating and leading many exchange programs for American and German students. You have encouraged, planned and guided trips to the Llano Estacado for many groups from different areas of Germany tracing the German author Karl May. You were appointed as the president of the Texas Germany Committee and started and backed new exchange programs between Germany and Texas. They are still prosperous today. More than 500 students, professors, members of music groups etc. were exchanged in each direction with your programs.

Your publications are concentrating on two main areas. "The German-Texan Settlement of the Llano Estacado" and "Karl May's Llano Estacado: Fantasy and Reality." You have presented many papers to these topics in America and in Germany. You organized an International Karl May Symposium in Lubbock, Texas, and study travels to the Red Indian areas last year.

As President of the Federation of German American Clubs, it is a great pleasure and honor for me to present to you the Lucius D. Clay Medal in Düsseldorf on October 6. 2001.

Sincerely yours,
Brunhild Pütz

VERBAND DER DEUTSCH - AMERIKANISCHEN CLUBS
FEDERATION OF GERMAN - AMERICAN CLUBS E.V.

The following is a list of Dr. McClain's accomplishments cited in support of the decision to honor her with this award:

- One of the Americans to assist Frau Dr. Von Katte in founding the Summer School in Wust, Germany, to teach English to former East Germans soon after reunification in 1990; Curriculum Director of the School 1991-1995; chamber music performances with faculty and students of the school in numerous venues throughout Saxony Anhalt; placement of twenty-two Texas Tech University faculty and graduate students in teaching positions at summer schools 1991-2001
- Established one of the first American University German language summer programs for U.S. students in the former East Germany at Wust, 1993-2000; and attended by twenty-seven Texas Tech University students last summer (2000)
- Participant and Host of the ten-year exchange program and partnership between Texas Tech University and *Fachhochschule-Wilhelmshaven*
- Invited lecturer in the German language at numerous venues in Germany over the past ten years and in English in Texas and the United States
- Organized traveling exhibits of Texas history and culture of the Llano Estacado within Germany; currently three exhibits are in Germany, and one, funded in part by a German government grant, is scheduled to begin the exhibition route throughout Germany in 2002
- Host for German-Texan and German-American conferences and tours at Texas Tech University in 1995, 1996 and 1998
- State Chair of the Texas-Germany Sesquicentennial Committee 1985-1986; appointed to this position by the Governor of Texas; state-wide meetings and organization of programs (some still on-going); hosting of German dignitaries in Austin

--- Long-standing cooperation with the government of Steglitz in Berlin, the German-American Institute in Saarbrücken (since 1986), the *Paedagogische Hochschule Weingarten* (since 1988), *Die Musikkapelle Markt-Erkheim* (since 1986), "Old Lubbock Town" outside Koeln (since 1985), and the Checkpoint Charlie Foundation (since 1999)

--- Managing Editor and Writer, *Umlaut*, the newsletter of the Southwest Center for German Studies, 1995 and 1998; mailings throughout Texas and Germany

--- Promoter of Karl May studies in America; International Karl May Symposium in Lubbock, 2000 (110 participants); co-editor of the symposium's proceedings to appear in 2001; author of articles in academic and popular presses (German and English languages); lecturer promoting awareness of Karl May's importance as a German phenomenon

--- Organizer of goodwill tours in Germany; Texas State German Dancers (Texas Tech University), 1983, 1985, 1987; sponsored by American Airlines and Daimler Benz; concert tours for musicians from Lubbock; Sue Arnold/Clinton Barrick, Susan Grisanti, Blue Prairie, The Prairie Heirs, the Texas Tech University Red Raider Marching Band

--- German-Texan Heritage Society; two terms as member of Board of Directors

--- Program partnerships with German-Texan communities and organizations throughout Texas; German Heritage Commission of Fredericksburg; Promised Land Network of Nazareth; St. Joseph's Parish of Slaton

RECIPIENTS OF THE LUCIUS CLAY MEDAL

1980 John McCloy, US High Commission for Germany

1981 Dr. Alfons Goppel, Prime Minister of Bavaria

1982 General George Blanchard, Commander of U.S. Army in Europe

1983 Louis Ferdinand, Prince of Prussia, Founder of German-American Clubs

1984 Manfred Rommel, Mayor of Stuttgart

1985 Eleanor Dulles, U.S. diplomat

1986 Dr. Karl Carstens, President, Federal Republic of Germany

1987 Walter Stoessel Jr., US. Ambassador to Germany

1988 Dr. Dieter Kronzucker, television commentator

1989 Lee H. Mitglied, U.S. Congressman

1990 Berndt von Staden, German Ambassador to the U.S.

1991 Vernon Walters, U.S. Ambassador to Germany

1992 Admiral Dieter Wellershoff, Inspector General, German Army

1993 General John Gavin, Commander of U.S. Army in Europe

1994 Hans-Dietrich Genscher, German Foreign Minister

1995 General John Shalikavili, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army

1996 General Klaus Naumann, Inspector General, German Army

1997 Dr. Edmund Stoiber, Prime Minister of Bavaria

1998 No award

1999 Dr. Walter Leisler Kiep

2000 Robert Lochner, Radio Berlin

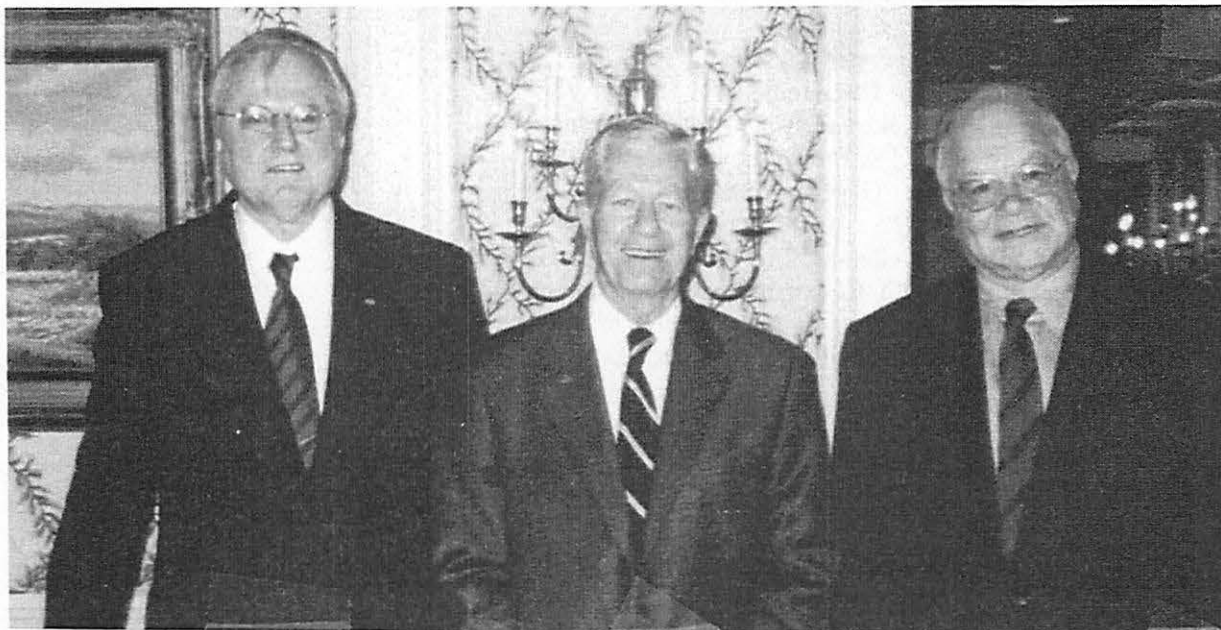
2001 Dr. Meredith McClain, GTHS Board of Directors and Texas Tech University

BEN BUECKER APPOINTED HONORARY GERMAN CONSUL
from the San Antonio Express-News, March 24, 2001
submitted by Frances Heimer Copeland

San Antonio attorney Bernard "Ben" Buecker, a member of the GTHS Board of Directors, received official appointment as Honorary German Consul for Central Texas at a ceremony and reception held March 22, 2001, at the Frost Bank Plaza Club in downtown San Antonio. This event was hosted by the German Consul General, Hanno von Graevenitz and his wife, Sigrid. Von Graevenitz presented Buecker with a document of appointment from Germany's President, Johannes Rau, authorizing Buecker to provide services and to influence cultural and economic interests in Central Texas on half of the Federal Republic of Germany. The new consulate will be located at 2201 Tower Life Building, 310 South St. Mary's Street in San Antonio.

Buecker replaces Honorary Consul Tom Pawel. Since returning to San Antonio from Heidelberg, Germany, in 1982, Buecker has practiced law involving German-American legal issues. He is a member of the Bavarian State Bar at Munich, Germany, and in the United States is licensed to practice law in Texas and Colorado. Prior to the unification of East and West Germany, Buecker made several trips to Communist East Germany (German Democratic Republic) with the intent of improving relations between the two German states and studied at the Technical University of Dresden in East Germany. For his efforts on behalf of German-American relations, Buecker was awarded the German Service Cross by President Richard von Weizsaecker in 1989.

The GTHS was represented at the March 22 ceremony and reception by Frances Heimer Copeland, GTHS Vice President.



L to R: Ben Buecker, Tom Pawel, and Hanno von Graevenitz, German Consul General

GTHS EXHIBIT FOR INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

By Theresa Gold

From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on March 28, 2001, San Antonio GTHS members Theresa Gold and Frances Heimer Copeland prepared and staffed an exhibit on German culture and German-Texans at the annual International Festival held on the Trinity University campus in San Antonio by the Trinity Multicultural Network, a student organization. (The purpose for this annual event is to promote appreciation of the many cultures represented by the university's student body.)

On March 21, only a week before the event, a student phoned Theresa to ask if there were a German club in San Antonio that could set up an exhibit for this event. (In previous years, German culture never had been represented.) Since a week was too short a notice to gain the support of an organization, if Germans were to be represented at this event, Theresa would have to do it on her own. She enlisted the help of Frances Heimer Copeland.

The "booth" at the International Festival was actually three tables arranged in a u-shape with red, black and yellow cloths. The exhibit focused on three themes: German foods, Christmas customs and German-Texans. It included artifacts, fresh foods, and books, with stand-up displays on German-Texans and Germans of San Antonio. Artifacts came from the personal collection of Theresa and Frances. Giveaways included pretzels, Werther's candies and brochures on New Braunfels and Fredericksburg as well as on San Antonio sites with a German heritage. Additionally, brochures from the San Antonio Central Library and GTHS membership information were available.

Trinity University faculty and staff expressed interest in the German origins of American Christmas customs and in German foods. Students were interested in the origin and meaning of German names. Theresa has "thousands" of cousins everyone, and one of them, a Trinity University freshman, was the first person to visit the exhibit!



L to R: Theresa Gold and Frances Heimer Copeland and a small part of their exhibit.

SAN ANTONIO GTHS MEMBERS ASSIST PUBLIC TV

By Frances Heimer Copeland

On March 17, 2001, a group of San Antonio GTHS members volunteered to assist Television Station KLRN-TV (San Antonio's public television) during the station's annual telephone fund-raising drive. GTHS members manned the station's telephones, receiving calls from viewers and accepting pledges of donations while the TV station aired a series of German documentary programs.

These programs covered a variety of subjects related to German-Americans, everything from the story of the German-Russian immigrants to German cooking traditions and cuisine. Viewers in the KLRN-TV area also learned of the hardships and discrimination German-Americans faced, how they fought for the U.S. in two major wars, and the contributions they made to American culture and economy.

Frances Heimer Copeland organized this group of volunteers and served refreshments when their long shift on the phone banks ended. GTHS participants were **Ben Buecker, Frances Heimer Copeland, Karen Copeland, Theresa Gold, Ingrid Kokinda, Gert Lewis, Hans Micklitz, Kathy Kappelman Pope, Edmond Seidel, and Dorothy Spencer,**



GTHS volunteers at television station KLRN-TV. L to R Front Row: Theresa Gold, Dorothy Spencer, Gert Lewis, Edmond Seidel. L to R Back Row: Ingrid Kokinda, Karen Copeland, Kathy Kappelman Pope, Frances Heimer Copeland. Not pictured: Ben Buecker and Hans Micklitz.

| |
|---------------------------------------------------------|
| NEW MEMBERS OF THE GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY |
|---------------------------------------------------------|

| |
|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted by Julia Germany, GTHS Executive Director |
|-----------------------------------------------------|

| <u>LAST NAME</u> | <u>FIRST NAME</u> | <u>CITY</u> | <u>STATE</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| BARNETT | CRYSTAL | SEGUIN | TX |
| BEARD | EMMAJEAN | SAN ANTONIO | TX |
| BETTS | EDITH MAECKEL | COLLEGE STATION | TX |
| BOLENDER | CORINNA | AUSTIN | TX |
| BRIDGES | DIANNE | FAIR OAKS RANCH | TX |
| BRIX FAMILY | KERRY | LEANDER | TX |
| CENTER FOR AM HISTORY | | AUSTIN | TX |
| CITZLER | ANNETTE | LA GRANGE | TX |
| CRAWFORD | VEANNA | NEW BRAUNFELS | TX |
| CRAWFORD | INGRID | CEDAR PARK | TX |
| DENSON | ROSE ANN PFLUGER | BELLAIR | TX |
| DURST | NELSON D | COLLEGE STATION | TX |
| FAHRINGER | CATHERINE | SAN ANTONIO | TX |
| FIELD | SIEGLINDE HORSCH | GEORGETOWN | TX |
| FRICKESSEN | ERIC | PASADENA | TX |
| FRIEDRICH | MR & MRS LOGAN | AUSTIN | TX |
| GERKEN | HERBERT & MARY | ROSENBERG | TX |
| GERMANY | JULIA G | AUSTIN | TX |
| GRAUKE | CLYDE | GARLAND | TX |
| GREEN | LUISE & STEVEN | WARDA | TX |
| GROGG | MRS JOHN | HOUSTON | TX |
| GUND | RAINIER | LAS VEGAS | NV |
| HAYDEN | DEBORAH | PLEASANTON | TX |
| HECHT | DOROTHY A | AUSTIN | TX |
| HEINEN | DIRK | AUSTIN | TX |
| HERRING | BILLIE GRACE UNGERER | AUSTIN | TX |
| HERRING | MR & MRS PHILLIP F | AUSTIN | TX |
| HITCHCOCK | MARTYN | AUSTIN | TX |
| HOWELL JR | JEFFERSON D | HOUSTON | TX |
| KLAR | ROLAND & JOYCE | SAN ANTONIO | TX |
| KREMEL | ADOLPH | AUSTIN | TX |
| KRETZSCHMAR | CHARLES | SAN ANTONIO | TX |
| LASWELL | BRENT R | KINGWOOD | TX |
| LEHMANN | ELIZABETH | BRENHAM | TX |
| LEYENDECKER | DOROTHY | COLUMBUS | TX |
| MERKORD | GLENN & PATRICIA | AUSTIN | TX |
| MORGAN | THELMA COLE | DAYTON | TX |
| NEILL | PEGGY H | LEMING | TX |
| NOELTING | GUNTER | AUSTIN | TX |
| OGBURN | KITTY | AUSTIN | TX |
| PALATINES TO AMERCIA | COLORADO CHAPTER | LONGMONT | CO |
| PARKER | JAMES M | SAN ANTONIO | TX |
| PASCH | CHRIS | AUSTIN | TX |

| | | | |
|-----------|---------------------|----------------|----|
| PETROSKY | DORIS HAGENDORF | AUSTIN | TX |
| PFLUGER | JEAN ELIZABETH | HOUSTON | TX |
| POPE | KATHLEEN KAPPELMANN | SAN ANTONIO | TX |
| POWELL | TRISH | ROCKDALE | TX |
| PRITCHARD | CELESTE | AUSTIN | TX |
| REVELEY | SARAH | SAN ANTONIO | TX |
| RHODES | DIANA G | NURSERY | TX |
| RYAN | MATTHEW | BOERNE | TX |
| SACHART | PAMELA | NEWORKI | DE |
| SCHNEIDER | ROSE MARIE (BARTEL) | COMFORT | TX |
| SCHROEDER | VIVIAN A | AUSTIN | TX |
| SCHUHMAN | ROBERT | LA GRANGE | TX |
| SCHULZE | MR& MRS HAROLD H | VALLEY MILLS | TX |
| SHOPEN | CECILE | AUSTIN | TX |
| STADLER | DORIS COOK | TEMPLE | TX |
| STEWART | ANNE | RADIUM SPRINGS | NM |
| TORRES | NELDA V | CEDAR CREEK | TX |
| WIEDMANN | MICHAEL | AUSTIN | TX |

THE 505 CLUB

What is the 505 Club? The address of the lot that we are buying next to the

German Free School is 505 East 10th Street. Anyone who donates a lot payment of \$1,792.43 or more will become a member of this exclusive club. *Join now!*

CURRENT MEMBERS OF THIS UNIQUE CLUB ARE

DR. BETTE EDWARDS
EWING "WING" EVANS
CHARLES (CHUCK) KALTEYER
RODNEY C. KOENIG
ANITA C. LADEWIG
JULIA MELLENBRUCH
DR. MEREDITH McCLAIN
DR. ROBERT A. NEELY
CARL W. SCHUMACHER, JR.
ESTHER MILLER STRANGE
ANNA THOMPSON

THE TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY

Two societies in Texas are pledged to preserve and encourage the heritage, culture and language of German Texans. Our **German-Texan Heritage Society** is one of these and the other is the **Texas German Society**. Many of our GTHS members hold memberships in both organizations.

For those interested in learning more about the Texas German Society, read the information below.

To join the Texas German Society remove this page and complete the Membership Application on the other side.

Founded September 6, 1983, in Harris County, the Texas German Society has as its purpose to preserve and encourage the German heritage, culture, and language of German-Texans and to continue these through communication, exchange, and good will with our fellow German-Americans and German people in other lands. It is non-political, qualifying as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization under Texas law.

TGS is a grass-roots organization, with each chapter conducting its own activities at the county, city, or area level, complete with a slate of officers. Programs and projects include museum exhibits, library drives, festivals, scholarship programs, singing and dance groups, genealogy workshops, food fairs, historical and cultural field trips, plays, poetry readings, sponsorship of exchange students, slide and video shows of trips to Germany and other German-related areas, and member or guest speakers who share their expertise with the groups.

The chapters are tied together state-wide with representation by each local president at the state executive committee meetings. State officers and directors are elected annually at the state convention by the whole body in attendance, and they meet two or three times a year to work with the hosts of the annual convention and the Christmas party and to deal with state-sponsored projects.

A convention is held in late March or early April each year, hosted by one of the chapters. The program consists of local history, entertainment, and fellowship, benefiting both the mind and the spirit. During the business meeting, the winners of the state-sponsored essay contest are announced. The essay-scholarship program benefits high school students studying German in the organized chapter areas.

A state newsletter, the *Texas German Society Reporter*, is published three times a year, in February, June, and October. It contains news of state-wide activities as well as news from the local chapters. Additionally, there are articles and reports on genealogy, reunions, general history, anecdotes, language, and cultural concerns relating to Germany, German-Texans, and German-Americans. Newsletters are exchanged with other German-American organizations. Members are encouraged to submit articles to the *Reporter*.

The Society sponsors an essay contest each year and awards two \$300 scholarships at the state convention to high school students who either are participating in or have participated in a German language course. The contest is open to any high school junior or senior student who lives in a city, county, or area where a Texas German Society chapter is located. For further information, contact Glen Guettler at (281) 444-7572.

"Das Haus," the Texas German Society Museum and Library at Schoenau, between Industry and Shelby in Austin County, was a donation by the Schmid family of the Witte-Schmid house and two acres of land. The *fachwerk* structure known as "Das Haus" was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in December, 1997. The marker was unveiled by descendants with a program coordinated by the Society. "Das Haus" is the site of state executive committee meetings as well as the annual state Christmas party and program, an afternoon event on the first Sunday in December. The museum is open for tours by appointment by calling Sanford Schmid at (409) 968-5520. Supported solely by donations and memorials, the Society hopes to preserve "Das Haus" as a museum so that it may be enjoyed by the present and future generations.

To Become A Member

To become a member and help preserve the German heritage of Texas, please complete the membership application below and either mail it to the chapter nearest you or bring it to the next chapter meeting. If there is no chapter in your area, mail the application, along with \$5 for state dues, to one of the addresses listed elsewhere in this brochure. Although you may elect to remain a member-at-large, you are encouraged to affiliate with the nearest established chapter or organize a new chapter in your area.

Membership Information

For the name and location of a chapter in your area or to organize a new chapter, contact one of the persons listed below. State membership dues are \$5. annually plus whatever dues the chapter assesses.

Joycine Hanath
4261 Routt Rd.
Chappel Hill, TX 77426
(409) 836-9127

Dorothy Leyendecker
903 Front St.
Columbus, TX 78934
(409) 732-3302

Van Massirer
124 Canaan Church Rd.
Crawford, TX 76638
(254) 486-2366

Gladys Arnold
680 E. Frontage Rd.
Victoria, TX 77905
(361) 575-0560

Christa Prewitt
P.O. Box 992
Elgin, TX 78621
(512) 281-2916

Glenn Guettler
13730 Hambleton Circle
Houston, TX 77069
(713) 444-7572

Flora Von Roeder
2515 Shakespeare, #2
Houston, TX 77030
(713) 666-6085

Membership Application

Name: _____

Street: _____

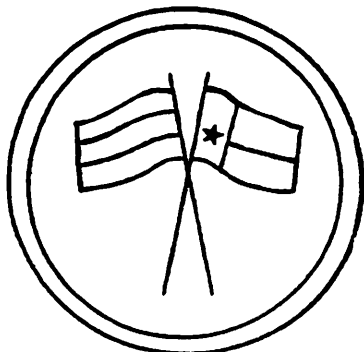
City: _____

State: _____ Zip + 4: _____

Telephone: _____

TEXAS

GERMAN SOCIETY



Usere Erbschaft Unser Leben

GTHS AND TGS HOLD FIRST JOINT CONVENTION

The GTHS and TGS for the first time ever met jointly at Waco, April 6-7, 2001, in the Waco Convention Center for a shared annual meeting. Arrangements and planning for the joint convention were by the Convention Committee of the Heart-of-Texas Chapter of the Texas German Society, chaired by Van Massirer (a member of the GTHS Board of Directors).

The program began on Friday afternoon with an optional three-hours bus tour to some of the German settlements around Waco, traveling through Crawford past President Bush's ranch to stop at Prairie Chapel School, an early 1900s one-room school house that offered education to many German children. The tour also included a stop at Canaan Baptist Church, one of several German Baptist churches in Central Texas, where visitors heard a short talk on the history of German Baptists and enjoyed refreshments prepared by the women of the church. The tour's last stop was Zion Lutheran Church in McGregor, one of the oldest German congregations in the region.

Back at the Convention Center at 7 p.m. that evening, Dr. Meredith McClain (a member of the GTHS Board of Directors), Associate Professor at Texas Tech University, spoke about the German-Texan historical panels on display at the convention. Dr. Ann McGlashan, a Baylor University associate professor, discussed her translation of a German-Texan's 1847 diary. These talks were followed by a social hour with music.

The Saturday meeting got underway at 8:30. Dr. Ute Lahaie, a Baylor assistant professor, talked about prominent Germans in the early years of Waco and Central Texas, Lois Myers discussed the fine points for tape recording family history, and Rex Wiegand offered information about the German Baptist churches in Texas. Other speakers included Dr. Ullrich Wagner, formerly with the Emigration Museum in Bremerhaven, Germany, who spoke about emigration records, and Sheryl Brown (former Executive Director of the GTHS) who discussed the role of Germans in the American "melting pot." Dinner was served at 6:30 p.m. and dancing began at 7:30 with music by the Charlie Nemece Band. During a break from polkas, waltzes and two-steps, the Dallas Schulplatters provided entertainment.

Many of those present at this year's convention hold memberships in both the GTHS and the TGS. Thanks to Van Massirer and to his committee for the time and hard work that went into making this first joint meeting the success it was.

NOTE: Plans already are underway for a second joint convention of GTHS and TGS in 2002. A committee from each organization has begun the work of jointly planning and organizing a shared meeting to be held in March of next year at Shelby in Austin County, near the first permanent German settlements in Texas.

**MINUTES OF THE 2001 ANNUAL MEETING
WACO, TEXAS, APRIL 7, 2001
Ingrid Brock, Secretary**

President Karl Micklitz called the meeting to order.

Sheryl Brown read the minutes of the last annual membership meeting on October 28, 2000, in Galveston, Texas. The minutes were approved as read.

The Treasurer's report will be published in the next Journal.

Chuck Kalteyer, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported on the Annual Operational Fund Drive. To date, total donations stand at \$18,477, from 263 donors, which represents 22% of our membership. 100% of the Board of Directors contributed.

Helga von Schweinitz, Chair of the Nominating Committee, nominated two present members for reelection to the Board of Directors: Dr. Meredith McClain and Dr. Terry Smart. She also nominated Dr. Hubert Heinen to fill a position vacant in 2002 (Helga von Schweinitz's position) and nominated Daniel Schoppe to a position presently vacant (Esther Strange's position). There were no nominations from the floor. A motion was made by Helga von Schweinitz to elect the four nominees. Rodney Koenig seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

President Micklitz introduced the new Executive Director, Julia Germany. Julia took the floor and talked about her background and what she has been doing. Then she talked about her work at the German-Texan Heritage Society, books she brought to sell at the convention, the cleaning of storage space, and the sale of old, broken furniture for \$400.

President Micklitz announced that one of our founding members, Terry Jordan, is very ill with cancer.

President Micklitz introduced Ben Buecker, one of our Board members, who was recently appointed Honorary German Consul for the San Antonio area, replacing Tom Pawel.

Rodney Koenig talked about "Leaving Your German Mark" and our 505 Club, which was formed for members who make a donation for a monthly payment for the lot at 505 East 10th Street in Austin next door to the GTHS Office.

Van Massirer talked about bringing together the the German-Texan Heritage Society and the Texas German Society to keep our German heritage alive and working.

Chuck Kalteyer talked about our \$20,000 goal for the Annual Operational Fund Drive and announced Ben Buecker and his group will contribute \$1,500.

President Micklitz adjourned the meeting.

**TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2000
Bette Williams, Treasurer**

Treasurer's Comments: The capital and operating funds campaigns (most funds were received late in 2000) produced \$36,422 which helped GTHS meet its 2000 budget requirements for operations and debt retirement. Little of the contributions collected in 2000 are available for meeting the 2001 budget requirements.

TGHS received two grants – one for building renovation (\$50,000) and one for the adjacent lot site work (\$25,000). As of December 31, 2000, \$13,711 had been spent on these projects, leaving \$61,269 to be spent from these grants.

During 2000 the market value of investments increased \$22,022, offsetting a decline in the value of the prior year. In 2001, the securities have continued to show an increase in value. Overall, GTHS net assets increased \$40,651 in 2000 which includes the \$22,022 of unrealized appreciation and the remainder expended on the building renovation, computer equipment purchases, and lot debt reduction.

**German-Texas Heritage Society
Statement of Financial Position
December 31, 2000**

Assets

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----|---------|
| Cash and cash equivalents | | |
| Unrestricted | \$ | 40,007 |
| Temporarily restricted | | 123,811 |
| Total cash and cash equivalents | | 163,818 |
| | | |
| Investments - temporarily restricted | | |
| Certificate of deposit | | 50,000 |
| Securities at market value (cost \$170,937) | | 173,049 |
| Inventory, at cost | | 16,981 |
| Land, building and equipment, net of depreciation \$48,830 | | 346,879 |
| TOTAL | \$ | 750,727 |

Liabilities

| | | |
|---------------------------------------------|----|---------|
| Accounts payable | \$ | 97 |
| Deferred membership dues | | 3,255 |
| Mortgage payable, secured by lot | | 36,565 |
| Unexpended grant funds (to be used in 2001) | | 61,289 |
| Total Liabilities | | 101,206 |

Net Assets

| | | |
|------------------------|----|---------|
| Unrestricted | | 142,861 |
| Temporarily restricted | | 285,571 |
| Permanently restricted | | 221,089 |
| Total Net Assets | | 649,521 |
| TOTAL | \$ | 750,727 |

German-Texas Heritage Society
Statement of Activities
Year Ended December 31, 2000

| | <u>Unrestricted</u> | <u>Temporarily Restricted</u> | <u>Permanently Restricted</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Revenue and Support | | | | |
| Dues | \$ 25,087 | | | |
| Annual Meeting | 9,685 | | | |
| Interest and dividends | 733 | 18,294 | | |
| Campaign contributions (designated \$13,058) | 36,422 | | | |
| Gifts (designated \$575) | 1,668 | | | |
| Grants | 12,000 | 75,000 | | |
| Events - net of cost \$6,656 | 5,054 | | | |
| Sales - net of cost \$2,081 | 752 | | | |
| Royalties and miscellaneous | 3,735 | | | |
| Realized (loss) on dispositions | | (347) | | |
| Unrealized appreciation in market value investments | - | 22,202 | | - |
| Gross Revenue and Support | <u>95,136</u> | <u>115,149</u> | | <u>210,285</u> |
| Unexpended and utilized grant funds | | (75,000) | 13,711 | (61,289) |
| Net assets released from restrictions | <u>23,294</u> | <u>(23,294)</u> | - | - |
| Total Revenue and Support | <u>118,430</u> | <u>16,855</u> | <u>13,711</u> | <u>148,996</u> |
| Expenses | | | | |
| Publications | 14,865 | | | |
| Publication advance | 5,000 | | | |
| Annual meeting | 13,016 | | | |
| Fund raising | 527 | | | |
| Publicity and community outreach | 1,460 | | | |
| Property and grounds maintenance | 5,452 | | | |
| Salaries and benefits | 42,399 | | | |
| Office expense | 2,512 | | | |
| Utilities | 3,900 | | | |
| Insurance | 1,877 | | | |
| Interest | 3,706 | | | |
| Supplies | 809 | | | |
| Postage | 1,719 | | | |
| Professional services | 897 | | | |
| Telephone | 1,429 | | | |
| Bank and credit card charges | 705 | | | |
| Miscellaneous | 1,248 | | | |
| Depreciation | 6,824 | | | |
| Total Expenses | <u>108,345</u> | | | <u>108,345</u> |
| Changes in net assets | 10,085 | 16,855 | 13,711 | 40,651 |
| Net assets, Beginning of Year | <u>132,776</u> | <u>268,716</u> | <u>207,378</u> | <u>608,870</u> |
| Net assets, Ending of Year | <u>\$ 142,861</u> | <u>\$ 285,571</u> | <u>\$ 221,089</u> | <u>\$ 649,521</u> |

**German-Texan Heritage Society
Statement of Cash Flows
Year ended December 31, 2000**

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Cash Flows from Operating Activities</u> | |
| Cash received from revenue and support, including grants, \$87,000 | \$ 198,352 |
| Cash paid for program service and operations | <u>109,169</u> |
| Cash Provided by Operating Activities | 89,183 |
| <u>Cash Flows from Investing Activities</u> | |
| Purchases of investments | (53,050) |
| Proceeds from redemptions and sales | 2,592 |
| Property renovation (from grant fund) | (13,711) |
| Equipment purchases | <u>(5,068)</u> |
| Cash Used by Investing Activities | (69,237) |
| <u>Cash Flows from Financing Activities</u> | |
| Payments on mortgage | <u>(17,803)</u> |
| Cash Used by Financing Activities | <u>(17,803)</u> |
| Net Cash Provided | 2,143 |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents, Beginning of Year | <u>161,675</u> |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents, End of Year | <u>\$ 163,818</u> |
| Reconciliation of Changes in Net Assets to Cash Provided by Operating Activities: | |
| Changes in net assets | \$ 40,651 |
| Adjustments to reconcile changes in net assets to cash provided by operating activities: | |
| Depreciation | 6,824 |
| Unrealized (appreciation) in assets | (22,202) |
| Loss on disposition of assets | 347 |
| Changes in assets and liabilities that provided (used) cash: | |
| Receivable | 540 |
| Inventory | 1,276 |
| Accounts payable | (187) |
| Deferred dues | 645 |
| Unexpended grant funds | <u>61,289</u> |
| Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities | <u>\$ 89,183</u> |

IN MEMORIAM

DAPHNE DALTON GARRETT

German-Texan Heritage Society member, Daphne Dalton Garrett, of the Woodlands and Warda, Texas, died January 19, 2001, in Houston at age sixty-seven. Daphne was a daughter of John R. Dalton and Inez Strickland Dalton. She attended Alamo Heights High School in San Antonio, the St. Louis Institute of Music, and Northwestern University. In 1960 she married Robert L. Garrett. Daphne authored seven articles for the new Handbook of Texas including those on Fayette County's history, the town of Warda, and Nassau Farm. She was an accomplished historical researcher and was archivist for the Wendish Heritage Museum at Serbin. Survivors include Daphne's husband, Robert L. Garrett of the Woodlands and of Warda; their son, Lawrence L. Garrett of Cuero; and her mother, Inez Strickland Dalton of San Antonio. A memorial service was held in the Woodlands and interment was at Forest Park Cemetery there.

IN MEMORIAM

SYLVIA E. GRINROD

Sylvia E. Grinrod, long-time member of the German-Texan Heritage Society, died March 25, 2001, in Kerrville, at age seventy-seven. She was born in Germany, a daughter of Colonel and Mrs. Udo von Bernhardt. In 1949, Sylvia and Harry Charles Grinrod were married in Bavaria and later removed to the United States. They retired at Kerrville in 1980, where Sylvia was active in Lutheran Church activities and volunteered at Peterson Memorial Hospital. She was preceded in death by her husband after forty-two years of marriage. Her survivors include a son, Harry Hubertus Grinrod of Georgia and a daughter, Sylvia Friederike Williams of Kerrville, and three grandchildren. Funeral services were held March 28 at Zion Lutheran Church in Kerrville, followed by interment at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio.

IN MEMORIAM

GERHARDT F. R. HEYE

One of the German-Texan Heritage Society's early members, Gerhardt F. R. Heye, died March 29, 2001, in San Antonio, at age ninety-seven. Born in Hallettsville, January 18, 1904, Gerhardt was a long-time Hallettsville resident, a member of Grace Lutheran Church, and owner of the Ben Franklin Store there. He held leadership positions in several civic organizations and, as one GTHS member recalls, always attended annual GTHS meetings in lederhosen, when Gerhardt would "dance the night away." Gerhardt's survivors include his

wife, Dorothy, and their son, Gerald R. Heye. Funeral services were held April 2, 2001, in San Antonio at Zizik-Kearns-Riebe-Saunders Funeral Home, followed by interment at the New St. John's Lutheran Cemetery.

IN MEMORIAM

OTTO JUERGEN HOFMANN

German-Texan Heritage Society member, Otto Juergen Hofmann, died at Austin, May 12, 2001. Otto was born in a German-speaking community near Kyle, Texas, in 1918, a son of Wilhelm and Frieda Hofmann, who emigrated to Texas in the late 1800s. Educated at the University of Texas, Otto retained a lifetime interest in church architecture, theology and music. He was a leading authority on pipe organs and built or restored numerous pipe organs throughout Texas. Otto's survivors include his former wife, Margret Hofmann of Austin; sons Franz Hofmann of Lockhart, and Steven Hofmann of Washington, D.C.; and daughters Helena Harcourt of Florida, Pamela Carson of Maryland, Barbara Yerby of Decatur, Anna Powell of Wimberely, and Heide Veselka of Pflugerville. Interment was at Live Oak Cemetery in Umland, Texas. A memorial service was held in Austin on June 3, 2001.

IN MEMORIAM

LEOLA K. TIEDT

Leola K. Tiedt, a founding member of the German-Texan Heritage Society, died May 16, 2001, in La Grange at age ninety-three. She was born in Fayette County at Carmine, a daughter of Paul and Anna Eichler Kiel. Leola and Otto F. Tiedt were married at Warrenton in 1931. From 1925 to 1978, Leola taught school in the Carmine, Oldenburg, Rock Hill, Round Top, and Warrenton communities and won many awards as a teacher of German. She was a member of St. John Lutheran Church at Warrenton and of many other organizations. Leola was preceded in death by her husband and by their son, L. O. Tiedt. Her survivors include three grandchildren, Mark Tiedt of Houston, Barry Tiedt of Keller, and Sharon Tiedt Gabriel of Warrenton. Funeral services were held May 18 in La Grange at the Koenig and Strickland Funeral Chapel, followed by interment at the Florida Chapel Cemetery near Round Top.

**This article appeared in the Fayette County Record, May 22, 2001
Submitted by Rodney C. Koenig**



Tiedt

Funeral services for Leola K. Tiedt, 93, and long time German teacher for the La Grange Independent School District, were held Friday, May 18 at 3 p.m. at Koenig and Strickland Chapel. Burial was in the Florida Chapel Cemetery in Round Top. The Rev. Karl Johnson officiated.

Mrs. Tiedt died Wednesday, May 16 at Care Inn of La Grange.

She was born July 15, 1907 in Carmine, the daughter of Paul and Anna (Eichler) Kiel. She married Otto F. Tiedt Aug. 23, 1931 in Warrenton. She served as principal for the Round Top-Carmine ISD for 17 years. She was a member of St. John Lutheran Church in Warrenton, Texas German Heritage Society, Future Homemakers Association, and The Herb Society. She taught school in Round Top, Rock Hill, Oldenburg, Warrenton, Round Top-Carmine. She taught school from 1925 to 1978.

She won many awards as a teacher, the La Grange yearbook, Leopard Spots, was dedicated to her in 1976, went to Minneapolis, Minn.

on a N.D.E.A. scholarship sponsored by the University of Minnesota; spent a summer in Germany on a N.D.E.A. scholarship sponsored by Stanford University, was granted an honorary membership in Texas Foreign Language Association, was Conservation Teacher of the Year in 1973, was Elementary Teacher of the year by German Council of State Fair in Dallas in 1973.

She was active in the 4-H Club as a leader and Home Demonstration Club member. She was declared "Homemaker of the Year" in 1940.

She incorporated many family songs into her Family Unit method of teaching German and wrote a book titled "Juchhe, Ich Lerne Das ABC," and taught sessions on the German language at the Elder Hostel.

She was active in the Texas Retired Teachers Association and the German-Texan Heritage Society in which she served as historian and scrapbook editor.

She was a member of the Fayette County Historical Society and did the research for the Oldenburg historical marker. To help pay for the marker, she wrote a book titled "Oldenburg, Wo Bist Du?" She also authored another manuscript entitled, "Lo and Behold, L.O. Appeared."

She was selected by Ali Safaei-Rad, a TV-Journalist of Cologne, Germany, to be in a documentary that tells what descendants of Germans are still doing to keep up their heritage. She was a Sunday School teacher and superintendent and organized the Luther League in a church she attended.

She entertained many Germans from Germany who were traveling through La Grange and the area taking them on personal tours of Fayette County and showing them the tourist attractions and telling the history of German immigration to Fayette County from their homeland of Germany.

Survivors include three grandchildren, Mark Tiedt of Houston, Barry Tiedt and his wife Terri of Keller, Sharon Tiedt Gabriel and husband Larry of Warrenton; great-grandchildren, Patricia Tiedt of Keller and Teddy and Betty Gabriel of Warrenton; sisters, Margaret Fritsch of Pasadena, Helen Sutherlin of Seguin, Ora Nell Schmidt of Seguin and Gloria Simpson of Oklahoma City, Ok.; and sisters-in-law, Glennie Tramp of La Grange and Edith Kiel of Seguin.

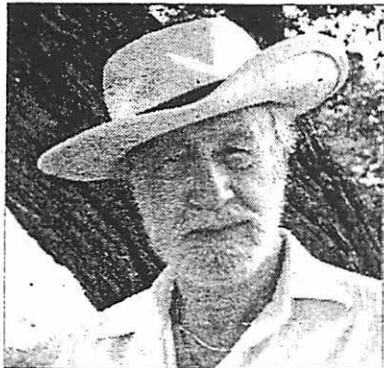
She was preceded in death by her parents, Paul and Anna (Eichler) Kiel; husband, Otto F. Tiedt in 1999; and son, L.O. Tiedt.

Memorial contributions are suggested to the charity of choice.

Koenig & Strickland Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

**This article appeared in the
Austin American-Statesman,
May 17, 2001**

Submitted by Margret Hofmann



Otto Juergen Hofmann

Otto Juergen Hofmann, age 82, with his family by his side, passed away on Saturday, May 12, 2001.

He was born in a German community east of Kyle, Texas, on December 9, 1918, as the youngest of ten children. His parents, Wilhelm and Frieda Hofmann, had moved there from Germany late in the 19th century. Otto and all his brothers and sisters learned to speak German fluently.

He completed Kyle High School as a valedictorian and accepted a scholarship to the University of Texas, where he enrolled in the Plan II program and graduated with a liberal arts degree. He also received a master's degree in choral conducting.

His interest in church architecture, in theology and classical music, the influence of his physics teacher, Dr. Boner, his father's mechanical inclination and his mother's love of art soon led him to study the extraordinarily complex science of the building of pipe organs.

After modest beginnings in a small shed on his parents' farm, he was awarded the contract to rebuild the large organ in St. Mary's Cathedral. He then built the organ for St. Stephen's Episcopal School. This was soon followed by the request to create an organ for the chapel of the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

With the help of apprentices and other organ enthusiasts who wanted to broaden their knowledge, Otto built, rebuilt and restored numerous organs throughout Texas and beyond. He became one of the leading American authorities on pipe organs. In fact, he was so highly regarded that he was elected to the prestigious post of President of the International Society of Organbuilders.

In 1953, Otto and his family joined the Friends Meeting of Austin (Quakers), and he remained its dedicated member. Many of the inspiring thoughts which he shared will be long remembered.

In 1975, Otto was awarded the Industrial Arts Medal by the Austin Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Also, he is a signator of the charter of the Texas Conference of Churches and was at one time a member of the Corporation Board of the American Friends Service Committee.

Otto enjoyed playing the cello in string quartets. He loved to play the piano and often entertained his noontime lunch partners in the South Austin Senior Activity Center.

During his regular dinner parties and barbeques at his home he entertained his guests with his masterful storytelling and his accordion playing. He had a unique ability to make so many people feel good! He was such an interesting person.

Otto was a dedicated "yellow dog" Democrat and was also involved in the Galindo Elementary Neighborhood Organization.

Otto is survived by his sister, Dorthea Hill of Marble Falls; his former wife and good friend, Margret Hofmann of Austin; and seven children: Helena Harcourt of Jacksonville, Florida, Pamela Carson of Jarrettsville, Maryland, Franz Hofmann of Lockhart, Texas, Barbara Yerby of Decatur, Texas, Anna Powell of Wimberley, Texas, Heidi Veselka of Pflugerville, Texas, and Steven T. Hofmann of Washington, D.C.

He is also survived by his grandchildren: Jeremy Harcourt, Toby and Alex Carson, Michael and Andrew Hofmann, Martin Hunter, Kevin, Eric, Kristi and Katy Powell, Heather, Holly and Stephanie Veselka and Alexa Haverlah and twin babies, Marshall Levi and Stephen William Hofmann, to whose birth Otto was, and we all still are, eagerly looking forward.

He treasured his two great-granddaughters, Cassidy and MacKenzie Hofmann.

Two sisters-in-law and one brother-in-law also survive Otto: Ernestine and Mae Hofmann, and Johannes Schultze, as do two daughters-in-law, four sons-in-law and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

According to his wishes, Otto was buried in a plain pine box in Live Oak Cemetery in Umland, Texas, on Tuesday, May 15, 2001.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Otto would be pleased to know that memorial contributions might be made to the Friends Meeting of Austin, care of Heidi Veselka, 17120 Bishopsgate, Pflugerville, Texas, 78660-1854, where they will be added to a special fund which was dear to his heart.

Remembrances of Leola Tiedt, "The Teacher from La Grange"

By Dona Reeves-Marquardt and Mary Mathis El-Beheri

"If anyone still remembers the days of Sputnik and what that national reversal meant for the United States and its educational programs, they must also think of the metamorphosis of **Leola Tiedt** from an average, though talented, elementary teacher to a national wizard of foreign language teaching at the elementary level. Through winning a National Defense Language Institute fellowship, Leola left her native and beloved La Grange, first going to an institute in the US, then flying off to Germany to attend one there. It was a pivotal experience for Leola. She returned to La Grange to take on the foreign language education program, ensuring that every public school pupil in town came to her for some German instruction. When we first met Leola, she had established twelve years of German language there and was teaching it all herself. Formidable task. Formidable woman. This program is still alive and very active today. LaGrange's German program is one of the best in the State of Texas.

A German teachers' meeting scarcely took place without Leola sharing her experience and wisdom with her colleagues. We recognized early that she was a unique force in our midst. And we called upon her again and again to help us, to set guidelines, to facilitate programs, to bake her unequaled peach cobbler. We remember a special meeting of the Texas Chapter of AATG (The American Association of Teachers of German) in La Grange in 1972, when Leola ensured that we also visit Round Top and become acquainted with German-Texan culture. For some of us, it was a germinal experience, not only finding the old Wagner place but also sampling a keg of beer for the first time at such a meeting! She knew ahead of time on that Fayette county had enough live heritage and history to change the course of what was taught in classrooms from that point forward. And she had young and old alike joining in "Juchhe, das ABC."

Most probably we should think of Leola as a gardener. Teachers fill their summer times with frugal ways of stretching a teacher's meager salary. Leola sewed and arranged her closet with a dress for every school day of the coming year. And she planted her garden, reaping a harvest of vegetables and fruits that made her endeared to many a lucky neighbor and friend. She was also a gardener of ideas; she seeded and sowed and gathered a crop of students, colleagues and friends who will carry her through several more generations.

Whether at a Society of German-American Studies meeting in San Antonio or at the 1978 Symposium on German-Texans at SWT, Leola was there, supporting, correcting, adding to what we knew about Germans in Texas. She was also a charter member of GTHS, attending every meeting as long as she could drive or catch a ride. When we embarked upon an early video project treating the German-Texans, Leola became our principle informer, guiding us to Ella Kauz, Don Nagel and others, and through homes, communities, churches, even cemeteries. She even pointed out the place where she would one day rest. We couldn't imagine a time would come without Leola. Her strength and humor seemed without boundaries. Even after she retired after more than fifty years of teaching, she remained a model for how to grow old gracefully." **Dona Reeves-Marquardt**

"The first time I met **Leola Tiedt** I was amazed at how young she was. Her mind whizzed. I remember the time she talked, with no notes, about Dona and me at one of the GTHS meetings. It was so witty and funny that everyone was falling in the aisles with laughter. She was over 80 at the time.

I remember the wonderful Sunbonnets she made for all of us when we had our meeting in Round Top. I still have mine and I think I need to wear it.

I can still see her sitting at the tables at all the meetings with her scrapbooks and other books with her "chatting face" on. She would tell us, "You know, my husband told me not to come home until I had said everything I needed to say" and she would laugh and tell us another story. She was married to Otto in 1931 until his death in 1999. They had a son. They had three grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

She started teaching when she was 18 and taught German for 53 years (1925-1978). She was a principal along the way. Can you imagine loving to do something so much that you did it for 52 years? Many of us can and do it, too. She loved to say she could teach someone German in 20 minutes. She would pull out her little book and begin. For her one would learn it that quickly!!

I remember "dropping in" to see her one hot afternoon at her home in La Grange. It was as if she had known I was coming. First, a big hug. Then she seated me at her kitchen table and proceeded to feed me. Wonderful soup and cornbread. And pie. Then she wanted to show me the history of La Grange and so we drove and walked all over the town and the countryside for hours. It was one of those rare treats in life that becomes a part of one's soul. An afternoon with Leola was a lesson in life. And I got to see that wonderful Christmas tree pictured in the spring 1987 GTHS NEWSLETTER on page 40. She showed me her treasures. Being a pack rat myself I was fascinated with the things she had that were over 100 years old or older, passed down from generation to generation.

It was always such a joy to see Leola at the Board meetings and at the Annual meeting, because she had positive, happy things to tell us. She contributed so much in those early years of the Society. She joined the Board in 1983. I am happy to see that Tiedt name is still carrying on the Scrapbook tradition. The girls: Miriam, Thecla, Leola and whomever else they could fit into their car were always there. They would tease that the youngest one drove!!! Leola was and is an everlasting spirit. Everyone regardless of age was drawn to her. She brought in many members with her special charisma.

Check the indexes for the various years of the NEWSLETTER and the JOURNAL to find Leola's articles. She had something in nearly every issue. One I like is "My Grandmother's Garden" in Volume 1, 1985, pp. 39-43. Those old issues are really fun to read through. She also hosted many meetings of the "Kaffeekraenzchen" with Lisa Kahn. She loved a chance to "practice" speaking German.

In the last few years as Leola was in the nursing home, I would send her an occasional fax, then I heard from a friend, whose mother was there, how she would show everybody her faxes. That made me feel good that I could do something to cheer her up. I had hoped to see her once more for a hug, but time ran out. I know she is smiling down on all of us and I can still feel her hand on my arm tugging, as she would say, "Mary, I want to tell you something." Thank you Leola for all the wonderful memories

I will put up on the AATG website pictures I took of Leola. If you have any pictures of her, send them to add to the site. If you have interesting tidbits you wish to share about Leola, please send them to me per email at: juma@texas.net and I will put them up on the website. You may also send pictures and tidbits to me per snail mail at: MacArthur High School, 2923 Bitters Rd, San Antonio, TX 78217. I can scan them and add them. Thanks." **Mary Mathis El-Beheri**

This is where you can find them. <http://lookit.home.texas.net/AATG/>

Note: Dona Reeves-Marquardt and Mary Mathis El-Beheri are two of the six founders of the German-Texan Heritage Society in 1978. Dona and Mary have fond memories of many wonderful Charter Members of the Society. Both Dona and Mary attended AATG meetings with Leola.

Genealogy Section

GERMAN TEXAN'S GENEALOGY SECTION

**Compiled by Christa Prewitt , Genealogy Editor, P.O. Box 992, Elgin, TX. 78621.
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BITS-PIECES-NEWS

Some sad news for German Researchers

In October 2000, the German government insisted that the Salt Lake City Library enforces Germany's 120 year privacy restriction on use of LDS films. This means that only a direct descendant may use civil records less than 120 years old. Luckily, these restrictions do not apply to church records or police registers.

This means you can not order a FHC German civil record film that has material from the last 120 years, but you may travel to Salt Lake City's Family History Library and fill out a detailed form showing the Person you want to research and your relationship to that person. This form, than gets approved by special officials and your identity proven by proper identification. If you need more than one film the process is repeated. Also, photocopying of these films is not permitted.

(Source: German Interest Group Vol.7.)

U.S. 1880 Census on CD-Roms:

The Family History Library in Salt Lake City has recently released the complete transcription of the original 1880 United States Census on CD-Roms. The collection of 56 CD-Rom disks contain approximately 50 million names and includes a National Index. This is the first National Index to the 1880 census. This index allows the user to search by names, localities and other parameters. This complete set of 56 disks sells for \$49. See www.familysearch.org for additional information.

(Source: Austin G.S. June 2001)

A book for researchers traveling to Germany.

A book for your Visit to the Homeland of Your Ancestors , by Dr. Roger P.Minert and Shirley J.Riemer.

This book, now in preparation for researchers to Germany, will become available in a few months.

Researching in Germany, will be the only book ever compiled strictly for the purpose of preparing German-ancestor hunters to travel abroad to research their German Ancestors. It is especially geared to family historians who have dreamed of visiting the actual towns or villages of their ancestors, but have not felt secure enough in their knowledge of what to expect or how to proceed. Topics of the book include: Initial planning for the trip; Ordering documents, making reservations; Packing and Luggage; Everyday life in the land of you ancestors; Conducting research; Entertainment and sightseeing; Customs and

From the Internet.

Have you ever wondered or had problems to research a State? Go to the Internet site: < www.genealogytoday.com/genealogy/states/index.html>, the page below will appear on your screen, and than follow directions

• StateGenSites*U.S. Genealogy State by State*

Genealogy Today is pleased to announce that it is the new home of the StateGenSites database of over 20,000 genealogy links. Launched on October 7, 1999 by Michelle Rich and Bill Hocutt, the SGS database started as an in-depth study of Alabama (by Bill) and Pennsylvania (by Michelle). It has since become one of the largest directories for U.S. genealogy, categorizing links by state within 27 categories.

StateGenSites Pages

Click on any of the states listed below for helpful genealogy sites around the United States.

- [Alabama Genealogy](#)
- [Alaska Genealogy](#)
- [Arizona Genealogy](#)
- [Arkansas Genealogy](#)
- [California Genealogy](#)
- [Colorado Genealogy](#)
- [Connecticut Genealogy](#)
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|-------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Submitted by Lorchen Freier Koehn</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------|

FREIER-FRANKE REUNION

The descendants of Edward and Mary Freier Franke had always gotten together yearly; but in 1983 they decided to extend it back another generation to include the descendants of the siblings of Edward and Mary. The reunion has been yearly, on the fourth Sunday of April, with the exception of a couple of missed years when Easter falls on that Sunday. This year the meeting was held at the Industry Fire Station meeting room with covered dish dinner, Sunday, April 22, 2001.

Edward Franke's parents were Rudolph and Louise Schwartz (Kruger) Franke Sr. Rudolph's parents were Ernst August and Mary Katherine Hoffmann Franke. Ernst is mentioned in the early historical records of Austin County. The siblings of Edward were Rudolph (wife-Ida Buenger) Franke Jr.; Carl or Charles (wife-Agnes Bittner) Franke; Emma Franke (husband-William Schramm); Herbert (Edna) Franke; Julius (Amalia Huebner) Franke.

Mary Freier Franke's parents were Joachim and Wilhelmina Hoppe Freier. Wilhelmina's parents were Christian and Fredericka Reeder Hoppe and Joachim's parents were Hans George and Johanna Fredricke Zeigler Freier. Mary's siblings were Anna Freier (husband-Henry Schuette); Otto (wife-Mina Hartmann) Freier and Otto's twin Herman who passed at the age of 12; Minnie Freier (husband-William Gaskamp).

Edward and Mary Franke had seven children; Anna and Henry Schuette had five children; Otto and "Minnie" Freier had one son; Minnie and William Gaskamp had two daughters. Rudolph and Ida Franke Jr. had five children; Carl/Charles and Agnes Franke had two or three children; William and Emma Schramm had several children; Herbert and Edna Franke had three children; and Julius and Amalia Franke had four children.

Present at the 2001 reunion (including spouses) were 18 descendants (three generations) of Ed and Mary Franke's family; two from Otto Freier's family; two from Rudolph Franke Jr.'s family; one from Carl/Charles Franke's family; one from the Hoppe family; and three guests. Our special guest was Marjorie Meyer Draehn, great-great-great granddaughter of Friedrich Ernst, founder of Industry.

Since this group is getting smaller and most of the descendants live more than 50 miles from the area, it was decided to meet next year at a restaurant that has a meeting room, rather than bringing covered dishes. Lorchen Koehn will continue to keep the directory current and to mail out notices of the meetings. Bubba Frank and Judy Rudloff volunteered to choose the meeting site for next year.

The directory needs constant up-dating when adding and correcting names and addresses. Also the directory is incomplete as far as names of the third and fourth generations being added under the proper family groups. Please call Lorchen Koehn, 361-552-6403; or write to her at 213 Burnet, Port Lavaca, TX 77979.

Submitted by Dorothy Noak Rothermel

57th NOAK FAMILY REUNION HELD AT ROUND TOP

Written by Diana Kallus

The 57th annual Noak family reunion was held Sunday, March 18, 2001 at the Round Top Rifle Association Hall with 105 members and three guests of the Peter August and Johanna Wilhelmine Mitzscherling Noack (Noak) family in attendance.

Before the catered noon meal was served, Robert Leonhardt of Houston, asked the blessing. After the meal, Tim Lawrence of Houston, called the business meeting to order. Diana Kallus of Victoria read the minutes and Lanette Williams of Carmine gave the treasurer's report from the previous year.

Five births were reported since the last reunion along with one adoption. The youngest person in attendance was Macey Sadira Kovar, one month old daughter of Matthew Kovar and Celia Noak of Schulenburg. The longest living female present was Irene Noak, 83, of La Grange and the longest living male was Nelson Noak, Sr. 83, of La Grange.

Four marriages were reported since the last reunion. Most recently married and in attendance were Greg and Christy Noak of La Grange, eight months. The couple married the longest was Nelson and Irene Noak of La Grange, 60 years.

Five deaths in the family were reported since the last reunion including Herman Greif & Marie Greif of South Carolina, Delphine Bergman of Round Top, Leroy Goehring of Round Top and Vernell Noak Jackson of Bryan.

Traveling the farthest distance to the reunion were Ron and Helen Greif of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Others attended from Bellville, Carmine, Houston, Wallis, Orchard, Taylor, Schulenburg, La Grange, Arlington, Missouri City, Bryan, Columbus, Victoria, Caldwell, Pinehurst, Rosenberg, Burton, Brenham, Austin, Round Top, and Pasadena.

Members of the Paul and Hulda Noak family will assume duties of the host family for the 2002 reunion. Diana Kallus and Lanette Williams were reelected to serve as secretary and treasurer, respectively.

Dorothy Rothermel of Brenham spoke to the family concerning a "Descendants of Peter Noack" booklet she had prepared for everyone. She also requested e-mail addresses of family members to make contacting them easier.

David Noak of La Grange read a narrative he prepared that has been added to a display at the Wendish Museum in Serbin regarding the wedding dress of Anna Greif, wife of Rev. Herman (Noack) Greif. Rev. Greif was born in Serbin to Peter and Wilhemine Noack and adopted shortly thereafter by the Rev and Mrs. A.D. Greif of Greens Creek. Rev. Greif became a minister of the gospel in the Missouri-Lutheran Church. He also served in the Greens Creek Church after completing his studies for the ministry, as well as Davenport and Williamsburg, Iowa. All were encouraged to visit the museum and see the display and to also visit the cemetery where Peter Noack is buried.

Door prizes and game winners were announced and the meeting adjourned with Clinton Marburger of Burton leading the Lord's Prayer.

**This photo-article appeared in the Giddings Times & News, February 22, 2001
Submitted by Cres Merrell**



This dance group from Texas was demonstrating German folk dance as part of the 7th annual Folk Dance-Folklore Weekend held at Giddings in February of this year. The Texas Wendish Heritage Museum hosted the event for the North American Federation of Folk Dance Groups.

Submitted by Dorothy Noak Rothermel

ROTHERMEL REUNION

Descendants of Andreas and Anna Marie Meier Rothermel met for their annual family reunion on April 21, 2001 at the VFW Hall in Brenham. Fifty-three persons were in attendance. Persons in attendance came from Brenham, Burton, Carmine, Pasadena, Alvin, Elgin, Houston, Richardson, Ft. Worth, La Marque, Midlothian, Sugarland, San Antonio, Bellville, and Dallas. Hosts for the 2001 reunion were the Bryan Rothermel family: Bryan and Virginia Rothermel, Gary and Beth Rothermel, David Rothermel, Michael Rothermel. A catered meal was served. Desserts were provided by those in attendance.

Families were introduced by the Rothermel descendant: James Rothermel, Bill Rothermel, Tom Rothermel, Annie Laurie Rothermel Thaler, Nathalie Rothermel Landua, Carolyn Rothermel Fuchs, Paul Rothermel, Jr., Bryan Rothermel, Bill Hudler, Betty Moore, Paula Moore Swilley, Ellen Rothermel Stuart, Louis F. Rothermel II, Mary Louis Rothermel Kister and Kenneth Murphy.

Three children were born into the family since the last reunion. They were: Corinne Elyse Poffinbarger, April 21, 2000. The parents are: James and Rachel Bird Poffinbarger of Humble. William Anthony Rothermel, August 18, 2000. The parents are: Anthony and Christine Rothermel of Atlanta, Georgia. Mattie Elise Niebuhr, February 12, 2001. The parents are: Mark and Rachel Ellermann Niebuhr of Brenham. Anton and Mary Vogelsang Rothermel are their ancestral family.

Jack Hudler and Jeanette Grand of Allen, Texas were married March 8, 2001. Two deaths were reported: Marian Hudler Hill of Gloster, Louisiana died May 3, 2000 and Kathryn Hill of Manville, Texas died May 10, 2000. Bernhardt Rothermel is their ancestral family.

Those in attendance for the first time were: Betty Moore of Ft. Worth, Vernon and Paula Swilley of Midlothian. Bernhardt Rothermel is their ancestral family. Also attending for the first time from the ancestral family of Louis F. Rothermel were: Louis F. and Jane Rothermel II of Houston, Ellen Rothermel Stuart of Dallas, Al and Mary Louis Rothermel Kister of Houston and Kenneth, Sue, and Alysse Murphy of Bellville. Mary Ellen Schreck of San Antonio was a guest.

Displays of family history, descendancy charts, photographs, family crests and other memorabilia were available for all to enjoy. Some very old letters from the Carl Vogelsang family, mostly written in German script, dating back as far as 1845, were shown by Paul Rothermel of Dallas. Many of the letters were from relatives in Berlin, Hamburg, Hannover, Germany, Stockholm, Sweden, and Texas.

Hosts for the 2002 reunion will be the Otto and Carolyn Rothermel Fuchs, Jr. family of Carmine.

Submitted by Arliss Treybig

BURT(T)SCHELL FAMILY INTERNATIONAL
France * Germany * U.S.
REUNION 2002

Saturday, April 13, 2002
St. Roch Catholic Church Hall
Mentz (Colorado County), Texas

Texas Branch -- 1846-2001

Descendants of Lucas and Maria Elizabeth Laux Burtschell

Katherine Burtschell & (1) Peter Nelson (2) Joseph Hennecke

Otilia Burtschell & Anton Heiman

Frank Burtschell & Anna Maria Maerz

Josephine Burtschell & Jacob Brod

Anton Burtschell & Wilhelmina Beimer

Joseph Burtschell & Gertrude Braden

Jacob Burtschell & Theresia Sinzel

Sophia Burtschell & Frank Kuhn

Henry Burtschell & Annie Hoover

For information, contact Arliss Treybig
PO Box 1236, El Campo TX 77437
979-543-3730 aatrey@wcnet.net

Submitted by Arliss Treybig

NICOLAUS TREYBIG FAMILY REUNION

April 21, 2001

Nicolaus Treybig descendants, with their families and friends, met on Saturday, April 21, at the Harmonie Hall in Shelby to celebrate their 155th anniversary in Texas. Nicolaus and Maria Barbara **Plonne** Treybig arrived in Texas in 1846 with their four children Friedrich, Caroline, Elise, and Bernhardt.

In 1845 the family of six traveled from their small village of Veilsdorf on the Werra River in the present state of Thuringia. The Treybigs sailed from Antwerp on the ship *Nahant* in November as part of the Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas, also known as the Verein. As a result of stormy weather in the North Sea that winter, the *Nahant* was wrecked off the coast of England in March, 1846. In May the emigrants finally boarded another ship, the *Timoleon*, which arrived in Galveston on August. The family settled first near Spring in the Houston area and later moved to the Shelby area of Austin County. Another daughter Fredericka was born in Texas; daughter Elise died in Texas.

In celebration of their history, the family held its first reunion in 1940. Descendants of Friedrich and Katherine **Wunderlich** Treybig, Caroline and George **Wassermann**, Bernhardt and Elise **Heyne** Treybig, and Fredericka and Henry **Wunderlich** gathered in La Grange. The reunions continued for many years until the 1970's. They were revived in 1986 for the Texas Sesquicentennial and the 140th anniversary. Subsequent reunions were held in 1991 and 1996 which marked the 150th anniversary.

This year approximately 375 persons shared family history through displays, photographs, and stories. Joining the Texas Treybigs were twelve Treybig cousins and two spouses from Germany and one cousin from Australia. While the Treybig history was read, the children of the youngest generation reenacted the journey and the early years of the family in Texas using simple props and costumes. The skit was written and directed by Karen **Kelm Hanley**. Other children's activities included hayrides and a craft center. Dominoes and cards provided additional entertainment for adults. Silent and live auction items were brought by both the Texans and the Germans. The live auction was conducted by Mark and Lance **Byrns**. Funds from the auctions will be used for future reunions and several special projects.

Photographs were taken of each of the four branches and the great grandchildren of Nicolaus and Maria. A business meeting conducted by general chairman Tammy Treybig **Zgabay** of New Braunfels followed a barbecue dinner. She was assisted by Jan Wassermann Kelm of Brenham and Edna **Wetz Nelson** of Houston. Several couples and individuals were recognized: Pete **Hanna**, 86, the oldest man; Wilma Wunderlich, 88, the oldest woman; Kevin Treybig, seven months, the youngest boy; Kimberly **Rotzler**, fifteen months, the youngest girl; Elton and

Earline Treybig, married sixty-three years; and Gene Nelson of California, the person coming the greatest distance, 1600 miles. Appropriate gifts were presented. Eldon and Lucille Treybig Langford were also recognized; they were celebrating their fifty-seventh anniversary at the reunion.

Jan Kelm reported on the progress of a special committee that is working on plans to provide a grave marker for Nicolaus and Maria on the Shelby cemetery. Although family tradition indicates that they are buried there, there are no marked graves. Caroline and George Wassermann, Bernhardt and Elise Treybig, and Fredericka and Henry Wunderlich are buried in the Shelby cemetery. Friedrich and Katherine Treybig are buried in the Florida Chapel cemetery near Round Top. The graves of the children were decorated with flowers and ribbons in the family's identifying color: blue (Friedrich), green (Caroline), yellow (Bernhardt), and red (Fredericka).

Additional reports were given by Jan Kelm and Glenn Geise. Mrs. Kelm shared her experiences while visiting the ancestral Treybig village of Veilsdorf and the Wassermann villages of Marksuhl and Gerstungen. She also had the opportunity to visit Berry Head, England, the site of the shipwreck. She was able to stay in the house of minister whose wife helped provide assistance for the Treybiggs and others who were on the ill fated ship. The house is now a hotel.

Mr. Geise spoke about the 2000 Treybig tour to Germany which included a reunion held in June of last year. Twenty descendants and eight spouses from Texas visited parts of southern and northern Germany as well as the villages of the Wunderlich, Wassermann, and Heyne families. While in Veilsdorf for the reunion, the Texans stayed with the German cousins.

Since 1990 the Treybig families in Germany have hosted a reunion each five years. The next German reunion will be held in 2005. Officers for the 2006 Texas reunion include Carol Treybig Doell, president; Edna Wetz Nelson, first vice-president; Jan Wassermann Kelm, second vice-president; and Tammy Treybig Zgabay, secretary-treasurer.

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| <p>THE ECKERTS OF BADEN By The Rev. H. Charles Eckert</p> |
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The children of Georg Bernhardt Eckert (1793-1874) came to Texas, beginning in 1853 after statehood. These descendants included the children of Katharina Margaretha Grosz (1820-60) after her death; Karl Friedrich (1822-1913), Georg Philipp (1824-1906), Bernhardt (1826-1913), Elisabetha Ischar (1829-72), and Ludwig (Louis), 1834-1920. After over 100 years in Texas, a book, THE ECKERT RECORD was written in 1957 with 1292 direct descendants listed.

Germans heard "glowing" reports of the "good, and cheap land" in Texas during the Republic (1836-45) when several newly arrived young men from Oldenburg and Westphalia provinces wrote back to Germany of their experiences. Since economic

conditions were severe in southern Germany, a German Emigration Society called "the Adelsverein" was organized in Hesse to protect and give assistance to immigrants wanting to pioneer in the Texas Hill Country along the Llano and San Saba Rivers which run into the Colorado River of central Texas. The Eckerts of Huffenhardt, Baden became part of that movement of several thousand Germans settling in Texas.

Georg Bernhardt Eckert, the stem-vater of the group, had fought in the Franco-Prussian War and did not want to leave his homeland. He was born Jan. 26, 1793, in Huffenhardt, Mosbach, Baden (between Heidelberg and Stuttgart). On June 20, 1820 he married Anna Margaretha Holoch, and they raised their children there. He was a wine farmer five miles west of the Neckar River in very hilly country.

Eight children were born to the couple, two died as children, and the eldest daughter married and died at age 40 in Germany.

1. Katharina Margaretha, born Nov. 16, 1820, died Feb. 20, 1860, married Sept. 3, 1844 to Johan George Grosz (1816-1900) of Schwanheim, Baden, Germany. They had six children, four of whom came to the USA. Her father, Georg Bernhardt lived with her family until his death, Mar 11, 1874 (81).
2. Karl Friedrich, born Oct. 5, 1822, served in the German military, married Oct. 2, 1846 to Eva Christina Guethoerle of Obergim pem, Baden. He operated a winery. Four of their eight children were born in Huffenhardt. Karl led his brothers in March 1853 to leave their homeland to come to Texas for a new life. They arrived at the port of Indianola on the Texas coast, then traveled to Fredericksburg.
3. George Philipp, born Nov 10, 1824, confirmed and began communing Mar 17, 1839 in the Evangelical (Lutheran) Church. He received a Volksschule diploma May 1, 1839.

On the trip from Germany, his brother Bernhardt, became sick at Victoria, Texas (about 30 miles inland) and George Philipp remained with him for a time. On May 3, 1853, he married another member of the immigration party, Margareta Karolina Vogler (1828-88) there; then they moved to central Texas, Mason county where they had fourteen children, two sets of twins, eight lived to have descendants

4. Bernhardt, born Dec. 18, 1826, served in the German military, came to America in 1853 with his brothers and his betrothed, Christina Dirolf. She fainted from weariness early in the trip, so the couple settled in Meyersville, Texas with other Germans who had been there since 1846. They were married July 31, 1853 by Rev. Adam Sager, Lutheran pastor at Meyersville, 1850-54. During the Civil War, 1860-65, Bernhardt fled to Mexico with other Germans to avoid the draft into the Confederate forces. He and Christina had seven children, the three youngest living to adulthood.
5. Elisabetha, the fifth child, born Mar 8, 1829, came to America in 1853 with her brothers and the Ischar family. She married May 1, 1853 in Fredericksburg, Texas to Johann Georg Ischar. Of their ten children, five lived to adulthood. They lived in the Simonsville community south of Mason, Texas.

6. Eva Christina, born Sept 12, 1831, died Aug 21, 1832 (11 months)
7. Ludwig, born Oct. 19, 1834, died Nov. 29, 1920. His mother died when he was age four Nov. 15, 1838 (40), so he and his father lived with his older sister Katharina Grosz. He was confirmed at age 15, received his school diploma in April, 1849, then served in the German military. He then left Germany Mar. 4, 1856, and arrived at New Orleans. He then went to his brother Bernard in Meyersville, Texas and then to Mason Co. where he farmed at Hedwig's Hill by the Llano River. He married Karoline Herber on Apr 16, 1861. He received USA citizenship Sept. 25, 1865. The couple had seven daughters, two dying as infants.

There has been another Eckert family book published, *THE GOLDEN YEARS*, bringing the family up into the 1990's. Every several years a supplement is added to bring "up-to-date" information on deaths, marriages, and children.

For more details, please contact, Rev. H. Charles Eckert, P.O. Box 26, Shiner, TX 77984. (361-594-2345).

**This photo-article appeared in the Giddings Times & News, February 22, 2001
Submitted by Cres Merrell**



COLORADO GROUP --
This group of dancers from Colorado present a special dance to members of the North-American Federation

of German Folk Dance Groups Saturday at the American Legion Hall in Giddings. People from eleven states came for the

performances, which were hosted by the Texas Wendish Heritage Museum.

-- Times & News Photo

OTTO VON ROEDER—PRUSSIAN NOBLEMAN AND TEXAS PATRIOT

by Flora von Roeder

Born October 29, 1807, at Bredenborn, Westphalia, Otto von Roeder, Austin and Fayette County entrepreneur, prominent Victoria County planter, and obscure Nueces County sheep raiser, appears to have had a distinctive personality. Dynamic, proud, and stubborn, he was the epitome of the Prussian nobleman, determined to succeed at whatever he undertook and reluctant to admit defeat.

Otto was the sixth of eleven children to reach maturity in a family with a long history of privilege at whatever the cost. His father, Ludwig von Roeder, was the fifth and only survivor of five brothers who served the Prussian king in the Napoleonic wars. Born at the family estate, Hoym, in Anhalt-Bernburg, the elder von Roeder lived there in the early days of his marriage to Caroline Luise Sack of Minden, Westphalia. He favored his wife's family, professionals but non-titled. Family friction and a desire to be independent of feudal responsibilities persuaded von Roeder to move west. This he did in approximately 1802.

A series of military assignments and moves took the growing von Roeder family from Hildesheim to Paderborn to Vörden and finally to the lands of the Benedictine Monastery, Marienmüster, near Höxter, Westphalia. In 1817 von Roeder sold all interest in the family estates at Hoym and Harzgerode to the widow of his deceased brother and bought the crownland, Marienmünster. His two nephews would become the direct heirs of the family estates and carry the family title at court.

It appears that von Roeder severed all ties with his family after the sale. Two separate letters were written in 1900 by von Roeder's great nephew to the Sack Foundation (a family perpetuity established in 1799 whose founder was Caroline Sack's uncle) in which he stated that he had heard his uncle had emigrated to America many years earlier and he wanted to know where and if there were any sons or grandsons. He went on to say that only six male eyes in the family remained in Germany. The foregoing would seem to indicate that his family was not informed that the von Roeder family planned to emigrate to Texas in 1834. There is much correspondence over the years with Caroline's family but none with his that is known.

During the preparation to emigrate, Otto, then aged 27, married at Bredenborn 26-year-old Pauline von Donop of nearby Wöbbel in Lippe-Deimold. They were married in July and sailed in September 1834. Highly educated, he had studied law at Heidelberg and Göttingen, had passed his examinations (probably equivalent to the bar), and was awaiting nomination as a court attorney.

Otto's and Pauline's lifestyle certainly changed drastically after their arrival on the eve of the Texas Revolution. From manor houses they moved to log houses with dirt floors in their first days at their settlement at Cat Spring, in Austin County. The dreamed of life of hunting and fishing turned into one of drudgery and dirt. Their son was born in a corncrib somewhere near the San Jacinto River as General Sam Houston and his men including Otto's brother, Louis, and brother-in-law, Robert Kleberg, defeated the Mexican Army.

Pauline died at Galveston a short time later, an event that must have weighed heavily on the young widower. Unlike so many of the German settlers who farmed their land and who remained within the communities of their fellow German speakers, and retained their cultural practices (which his parents and siblings did at Cat Spring), Otto left the fold and struck out on his own. He saw the opportunity offered by the increasing number of new arrivals. On January 16, 1838, in Austin County, he received a certificate for a headright granting him a league and labor of land. He would receive final title to a tract of 1,653.26 acres in Gonzales County on December 12, 1849, and 2,952.27 acres in De Witt County on December 29, 1854. However, he began closer to home.

One of the principal German settlements in Texas between 1836 and 1840 soon grew up around the Otto von Roeder gristmill. Named for David Shelby, the settlement was also identified as Rödgersmühle by the German population who settled in along the upper stretches of Mill Creek in northwestern Austin County. As the number of German immigrants continued to increase many, with financial problems, turned to Otto whom, they believed, could advise them and help them.

The formation of the German Adelsverein in 1842 was responsible for many of these people arriving in the area. Underfunded and poorly organized, the German Society had not been able to provide

the protection promised to those arriving; so many of the settlers were left to shift for themselves. A number of them found their way to the earlier German settlements where they could find badly needed supplies that they needed. Otto von Roeder's mill was their source of grain for food but they had no money with which to pay him. Otto, who obviously had learned English quickly, was able to negotiate the purchase of grain and supplies from farmers in nearby counties to keep up the brisk business he had built. The settlers had no money to pay him for supplies, so they offered him their land claims for one-half price. He bought them at their figures and then charged the Adelsverein full value price for repayment. It eventually owed him \$18,000. Knowing he would soon have a cash flow problem by giving so much credit as well as getting it, he used the amount due him and made a deal with the German Society to take over ownership of its only real asset, the Nassau Plantation in northern Fayette County. Then he immediately began selling off acreages, the largest (800 acres plus a manor house) to Peter Carl Johann von Rosenberg in 1850.

The contact with the von Rosenberg family from Memel was made through Otto's brother-in-law, Ferdinand Engelking, who, with his wife and Otto's youngest sister, Caroline, was returning home from a visit to Europe. The von Rosenbergs were aboard the same ship, the *Franciska*.

However, in 1851, a judgment was filed against the Adelsverein in La Grange. Apparently, the Society had had so much debt that it had sold the property several times. In order for the title to be cleared, it was decided to sell the land at a sheriff's sale at 4 cents an acre. Otto, claiming to be the owner of the German Company's property, was charged with payment in the amount of \$150 to obtain a clear title. As a matter of principle he refused to make this payment. This occurred on May 3, 1853.

This stubborn refusal was obviously a big mistake on Otto's part. In 1859 the plaintiff won a judgment against von Roeder. All those to whom he had sold land did not have a clear title and were required to buy it a second time. The case was tied up in litigation for years including throughout the Civil War. In 1865 the U.S. Supreme Court heard the case and ruled that the Adelsverein had never been the legal owner of Nassau because it had not been incorporated in Germany nor in the United States. All were responsible for their own debts including Otto.

There are various written statements by people who were acquainted with or who knew Otto personally during this time. We know from Wolfram Von-Maszewski's translation and recent publication, *Voyage to North America*, that Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels, First Commissioner-General of the German Society, made a diary entry dated Sunday, July 14, 1844, stating: "Correspondence in the morning between visits by Honnen and von Röder. I like the former but the latter is very much like a vagabond."

In letters written by his brother-in-law, Ferdinand Engelking,¹ to family members in Germany, Engelking commented several times on Otto and on Otto's wife to be. Actually, he commented more on the latter than on the former. Earlier in the correspondence, Engelking mentioned his brother-in-law in reference to Otto's knowledge of horses when he, Engelking, wanted to buy one for his wife.

In April 1842, Engelking wrote his mother that Theodore Sack (called Dora) had a girl in March last year (1841). In a letter dated August 3, 1844, he told his mother that Philipp Sack had died June 5 that year. He went on to say: "The newly inconsolable widow within two months began a romantic adventure, causing her relationship with the von Roeder family to end over it." He added that he did not yet know when or if the couple would marry. He did not mention in that letter with whom the widow had begun the "romantic adventure." He then added that Auguste Ploeger, younger sister of Theodore, arrived the previous winter and lived with Theodore and Philipp for awhile but left because she could not get along with her sister and went to live with the elder von Roeders. In January 1845 Engelking wrote his mother, "The widow Sack after scandalizing people by living months with my brother-in-law, Otto von Roeder, has married him the beginning of this year."

Actually, the marriage was recorded in La Grange on January 15, the same date as the letter is dated. The couple began married life as a family with three children between them—his son, Ludwig Joachim, almost nine, and her two children, Adolphine, 4, and a son, Carl, probably past 2 and not mentioned in the Engelking letters.

However, Peter Carl and Amanda Fallier von Rosenberg wrote most often of Otto and his wife. These letters were compiled and published by Charles W. von Rosenberg in 1978 in *Ancestral Voices*.

Actually, Amanda appeared to have been somewhat mesmerized by the couple. On May 23, 1850, she wrote from Nassau: "Engelking's wife is very amiable although Roeder's wife puts everyone in the shade. Indeed Mrs. Roeder is an outstanding woman in intellect as well as beauty. She is a unique woman whom I love dearly. She is a lady who would be a credit to salon society. In contrast, Mrs. Engelking, the lovable mother of three very lively, smart boys, appears to be the motherly type. She has been in Texas 17 years, Mrs. Roeder 10. Mrs. Roeder received her education as the daughter of Privy Counsellor Ploeger in Minden."

Later in the letter she wrote: "On May 26, Mrs. v Roeder and later Mr. v. Meerscheidt (to be a von Rosenberg son-in-law) visited us. It was a pleasant afternoon. This always happy, lively woman brings cheerfulness whenever she comes. She seems so uncomplicated, so unpretentious, she takes everything so calmly. She is unique and what is more, we women feel more and more drawn to one another. Her life would furnish material for the best novel. I have enough material, in part from her herself, partly from her mother and also from Engelking, whose betrothed she once was (they themselves broke the engagement in Europe).² Now you know why I think so much of Mrs. Roeder. But Roeder is charming, active, warm too, whereas Engelking fancies himself above the world and looks down on its operation... Mrs. Roeder and her intelligent mother, pampered by high society, who would like to guide the fate of her children with her own hand, always has to recognize the hand of one above her."

In August 1850, Amanda again praised the von Roeders in a letter to her sister: "Today I expect Mrs. Roeder will come up here. Then there will again be much laughter and pleasantry. I am more serious. When Mrs. Roeder comes, it is as though a fairy waved her magic wand. Everyone welcomes her with love, but with her shining wit, who wouldn't worship this spirit? Oh, to me it is a phenomenon I look upon with admiration. Though the dear Lord gives heavy cares, he also gives much cheerfulness. He has led this woman through things her whole life of which we have no comprehension. When she tells of these I become quieter and quieter, a tear comes into my eye, and even sometimes I have stood up and pressed Mrs. v. Roeder to my breast and kissed her. It was pure worship I gave her.

"But Roeder is admirable too. There couldn't be two men more different than Engelking and Roeder, but the latter has such a good friend in me that I often ask which of the two is the more admirable. My opinion of Roeder isn't as clear as of Engelking because Roeder doesn't reveal himself as openly and freely. He, at any rate, demands much of a woman whom he would respect because he would presumably apply a standard for his own wife and whoever wanted to achieve his respect. But to attain the esteem of the quieter, more thoughtful, strict Roeder is also a great deal.

"This summer I was not well; fears bothered me. Nowhere did I find calm. Hardly had Roeder heard I was sick, he was here. He thought I had acclimatization fever; besides much bile had accumulated. He gave me a remedy. Mrs. v. Roeder, who has quite a lot of medical knowledge, cooked the mixture. They visited me often, alternately, talked courage into me, and soon there was improvement. Now often when the fears return, they come over quickly."

There were by this time four younger children. Otto's and Dora's children together began arriving nine months after they were married, i.e., Caroline in October 1845, Henriette in June 1847, Fred in September 1848, and George W. in June 1850. Only one more is known to have been born to the couple, also in Fayette County, Otto, Jr. in March 1852. When young Carl Sack died is unknown; he was listed as Charles in the 1850 census but did not appear in 1860.

Sometime after 1855 Otto moved his family south, taking all of the slaves from Nassau with him. His cash assets obviously were great because he was able to buy and establish an extensive cotton plantation at the lower end of Mission Valley. He had the labor with which to work much land and accumulate wealth. He had become good friends with Archie Clark, who, along with his family, prospered along the banks of the Guadalupe eight miles north of Victoria. Roy Grimes writes in *300 Years in Victoria County*:

"Victoria County had grown to take its place as one of the wealthier counties of Texas by 1860, even though only four of its citizens could be included in a census list of two hundred sixty-three Texans who owned total property of \$100,000 or more. But there was a somewhat more even distribution of wealth to Victoria County than was the case in a number of the other counties, and at least fifty-three families in the county could be listed as well-to-do with property holdings of \$20,000 or more. The

listing of property was voluntary on the part of the owner.”

Otto von Roeder was listed as a farmer, age fifty-two, from Germany with cash property of \$15,400, forty-five slaves, and other property valued at \$33,953. His neighbor, Archie Clark, was listed as a stock raiser, age forty, from Pennsylvania, with cash property of \$10,000 and other property and stock worth \$24,000.

On November 19, 1857, the von Roeder and Clark families had become closely united as Otto's step daughter, Adolphine Sack, married Clark's oldest son, Thomas Hines. The first-born son of the couple was named, Otto Archibald. On January 4, 1861, Otto deeded 441 acres of the old John York grant on the southwest side of Coletto Creek to Adolphine Clark. He apparently had acquired the acreage around October 1855 when he signed a mortgage for a league of land from that estate.

In the summer of 1857 Otto's younger and only living brother (resident of De Witt County since 1847) was killed. The death, by accident, was certainly unexpected, and there was no will. The deceased left a widow, a large estate, and seven minor children. Otto was appointed guardian of the minor children while the estate was appraised.

It took some time for the inventory of the property to be filed. Meanwhile, the Civil War intervened. Otto's cause was obviously a far cry from most German families whose sentiments lay more in the principle of States Rights than the slavery issue. They were opposed to secession but accepted the move if somewhat reluctantly. Otto was ready and did go to war. In 1861, at the age of fifty-four he joined Company A of Victoria County's reserve troops.

In 1863, Otto was appointed Administrator of the estate of his deceased brother. However, in the fall that year, Col. John A. Emison, commanding the 24th Brigade of State Troops, received orders from the Governor to draft a certain percentum of those subjects to such services. On November 24, 1863, while defending Mustang Island, a group from this brigade surrendered and was taken prisoner and sent on its way to New Orleans. Col. Otto von Roeder was one of the captured members of this group. Kept prisoner until June 1864, the group was released. They were exchanged at the mouth of the Red River and boated to Alexandria, then transported overland to Niblett's Bluff. From there they went by rail and water to Houston. The group reported having been treated well during their imprisonment.

Here again Otto obviously made quite an impression with anyone he came in contact. A young Confederate soldier wrote home frequently about his friendship with an old Mr. von Roeder who had taken him in when was critically ill. The same soldier met Mr. von Roeder again in New Orleans where he had been for awhile against his will (obviously during imprisonment also).

On May 10, 1866, Otto's attorney filed a document in the De Witt County Probate Court requesting to be relieved as administrator of his brother's estate. The request was granted. This seems to have ended his involvement with his family once more. His mother's will had even changed the destination for the family Bible from him to his sister, Rosalie Kleberg. He had his own problems to deal with in the aftermath of the war.

Victor Rose wrote in *History of Victoria County*: “After an absence of five years the writer stepped into J.O. Wheeler's store on Main Street. In the commodious house there was absolutely nothing in abundance but space; and the long lines of shelves like skeletons grinning a welcome to the wanderer's return. But William T. Mitchell standing by the old gas generator selling Col. Otto von Roeder a pair of shoes did present a picture of the olden time; and like an electric flash, thoughts of the peaceful past, time distance, war-flitted through the mind, under such circumstances only can the ties of friendship be properly felt and fully appreciated.”

Some sources proclaim that after the Supreme Court decision in 1865 and the years of reconstruction, Otto moved west, broken in spirit and died in poverty. The defeat was probably a mighty blow, and he may have been down, but he was not yet out. In an effort to keep a low profile, he relinquished the management of his property to his oldest son, Ludwig. Archie Clark, who had probably possessed the largest stock of cattle in the county prior to the war, did likewise.

An entry in the 1870 census demonstrates this desire for disguising his identity. This writer found Otto's whereabouts by being able to identify his family if not him. He was found enumerated in the Santa Gertrudis Precinct 5 in Nueces County with a post office address of Corpus Christi.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----|---------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| Von Rhoder, Otto | 69 | Sheep Raiser | born Hungary | Personal Property Value \$3,600 |
| Sarah | 60 | Keeping House | born Bavaria | |
| Fred | 22 | Herding stock | born Texas | |
| George | 19 | Herding Stock | born Texas | |
| Otto | 16 | | born Texas | |
| Caroline | 26 | | born Texas | |

Only Henriette who was already married to Reuben Curtis is missing from the list. Otto born in Hungary and Dora (called Sarah in the census) born in Bavaria were a pretty scanty disguise actually.

Otto von Roeder was obviously a complex man, one not to be easily forgotten. His name was obviously well known and remembered.

After a great Gulf of Mexico hurricane obliterated Indianola around 1886 for a final time, a somewhat mysterious gentleman appeared in Victoria. He is to be found on the 1880 census enumerated with an extended family in Indianola in Calhoun County:

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|---------------------|------------|----|------------|---------------|
| Miller, Eri | white male | 53 | carpenter | born New York |
| " Sarah | wife | 51 | | born New York |
| Crossland, Claude | son-in-law | 23 | blacksmith | born Texas |
| " Nellie | daughter | 18 | | born New York |
| Crossland, Claude | grandson | 1 | | born Texas |
| " Josiegranddtr. | 2-1/2 | | | born Texas |
| <u>Rodern, Otto</u> | boarder 44 | | musician | born Germany |

In 1974 in celebration of Victoria's sesquicentennial, the *Victoria Advocate* compiled and published a scrapbook of the city's history. One of the entries was entitled "Professor Otto von Roeder...Musician, Lawyer, Exile? Man of Mystery!" It took a great deal of its information, including a photo of a white bearded gentleman, from a book entitled *A Pictorial History of Victoria and Victoria County* by Leopold Morris published by Clemens Printing Co., San Antonio in 1953. Morris had confused the picture of the more recent Victorian with the name and some of the history of the original one. The article was provocative and captured the interest of *Victoria Advocate* columnist, Henry Wolff, Jr. The article referred to the earlier von Roeder and asked if this later one could have been a son of Otto? The article even went on to say that legend had it that the fellow had been exiled because of a romance with a princess. There was no documentation given as to where the biographical material came from.

Going back into earlier articles published in the newspaper, Mr. Wolff began studying the history of this fellow. On Sunday, April 5, 1981, his column entitled "Professor Mysterious" made its way to this writer. Thus began a correspondence and a joint desire to solve the mystery of this fellow who so often was erroneously linked with Otto von Roeder.

In 1994 Mr. Wolff obtained a death certificate in Victoria on a George Otto H. Herold von Roederu, age 81 who died there November 3, 1917. Burial was the following day. Occupation given was musician; he was single; date of birth and names of parents were unknown. In earlier columns Mr. Wolff had noted that the subject served in the Union Army in the Civil War but was buried in a Confederate plot in Victoria's Evergreen Cemetery. He had frozen to death one cold night and was found in a doorway the next morning. He had died in poverty.

All this obviously called for further investigation. This writer obtained a copy of the gentleman's military and pension records from the National Archives in Washington, D.C., and thus began unraveling a great deal more information. Born in Trebnitz, Prussia, March 20, 1837, George Otto Herold Hoppe arrived in New York City and worked as a clerk until he enlisted in the U.S. Army on March 11, 1862. He served in campaigns in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C., where he was discharged on March 11, 1865, as 1st Sargeant. He remained in Maryland until May 20 that year when he joined Co. 4 of the U.S. Cavalry. He was sent to the Southwest and served in Indian Campaigns in New Mexico and Arizona. He left the Cavalry at Fort Concho, Texas, temporarily remained there, and then moved to Chappell Hill, Texas, where he lived from 1871-76 and worked as a master clerk. Then he moved to Indianola, where he worked as a teacher from 1876-86.

Inasmuch as he was listed as Otto Rodern on the 1870 census, he obviously changed his name after he left military service having enlisted as Otto Hoppe. However, when he applied for military pension, he signed his name as George Otto Herold von Rodern causing a great deal of confusion and delay in receiving his pension. By that time he had had several name changes or add ons, so who was he and where did he really come from? His military record said Trebnitz, Prussia, and Liverpool, England. He'd obviously spent quite some time in the latter. He was well versed in English and appeared quite well educated. But his Prussian background was still a mystery.

According to the 1998-99 *ADAC Atlas of German Europe*, there are five such villages or towns, one in Brandenburg, one in Thuringia, one in the Czech Republic, and two in Saxon-Anhalt. Saxon-Anhalt was the obvious first choice with which to begin (Otto von Roeder's ancestors evolved in Anhalt). One Trebnitz was located some kilometers south of Halle; the other was 15 kilometers south of Bernburg, the same princely city where Otto von Roeder's first cousin, Friedrich Wilhelm von Roeder (1803-1869), served as forestmaster to the Duke of Anhalt-Bernburg. This von Roeder was one of the two nephews of the elder von Roeder who had inherited the family estates at Hoym and Harzgerode and the father of the writer of the 1900 letters to the Sack Foundation.

A microfilm of Protestant Church baptisms of this village, ordered from the Latter Day Saints collection in Salt Lake City, gave the answer to the identity of Otto Hoppe Roedern. Christolph Georg Hoppe was born March 20, 1837, at Trebnitz, the son of Wilhelm Hoppe, a miller and his wife, Maria Dorothea Kappus Hoppe. It was the Godfather, Georg Herold, who might be the key to some of the mystery. Herold was 83 years old when his Godson was born. Herold was the chief forester and head huntsman on the estate on which Trebnitz was obviously the chief village. His Godson was not yet four when he died. The entry of his death in the Trebnitz church book states that he was survived by foster grandchildren and foster grandnephews and his wife's grandson. He had no children of his own. Inasmuch as the von Roeder name is connected with forestry and so was he, the Hoppe child may have heard stories from his parents or others about his Godfather being a forester for a von Roeder. This could account for his adapting a name so similar.

The secret of how Otto Hoppe Roedern determined to become who he stated himself to be in later years went to his grave with him. He died alone and in poverty; yet he certainly attracted the attention of those who knew him in life as well as those who have wondered about him long after he died. May he rest in peace whoever he was.

The real Otto von Roeder was the last surviving male member of his siblings. When he died the end of July in 1875 at age 67, he left three sisters, Mrs. Ernst (Louise) Kleberg, Mrs. Robert (Rosa) Kleberg, and Mrs. Ferdinand (Caroline) Engelking, who could remember their home and lives in Prussia. We have no record of their being present at his funeral. But he certainly was given a colorful sendoff.

"AN OLD TEXAN DEAD

Yesterday morning at 4 o'clock died one of the oldest and best citizens of Texas, a veteran of her wars for independence, one of the first white settlers, having come to Texas in 1832³ and one who, in all the walks of private life, possessed a character marred with scarcely a blemish.

Otto von Roeder was born in Prussia in the year 1807, and was consequently 68 years.

He participated in the struggles of the Texas war, and was one of the noble band of heroes who so bravely contested and won the Battle of San Jacinto.⁴

His death yesterday was sudden and unexpected. We understand that one of his last wishes was that he be buried with military honors, and that the Texas flag, for which he had fought so bravely in life, wave over him in death. In compliance with this wish, the Star Rifles, armed and uniformed, with their flag draped in mourning and with reversed arms, attended and assisted at the old veteran's obsequies.

At the grave a beautiful, eloquent and touching tribute was paid the many sterling qualities of the deceased by Rev. C.M. Rogers, and a short history of his past services recited. A large assembly of citizens, including six old Texans (Capt. Humphreys, H.W. Berry, Jno. Anderson, Col. Spann, J.R. Peterson, and Wm. L. Rogers) attended the funeral."

The above obituary had no reference written on it. The source has been concluded as follows: Believed published approximately August 1, 1875 in the *Valley Times* according to the WPA Index (paper no longer available). Reference to the death was also made in the *Dallas Weekly Herald*, dated August 7, 1875, Col. 1, in which it refers to the *Galveston News* dated Tuesday, August 3, 1875 (the reference was not found in that paper).

Otto von Roeder is buried in the Old Bay View Cemetery in Corpus Christi. There is no tombstone to mark his grave. Located on Ramirez Street near its intersection with the I-37 access road in the bluff section of the city, Old Bay View Cemetery (not to be confused with a newer Bay View Cemetery) is the oldest Federal Military Cemetery in Texas and is maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department of Corpus Christi.

Dora von Roeder died less than six months after her husband. A short obituary appeared in the San Antonio *Daily Herald* on January 3, 1876:

"The funeral of Mrs. Theodore von Roeder took place from the residence of her son-in-law, Mrs. T. Hines Clark, this morning at 9:30 o'clock. It was largely attended. Mrs. von Roeder was the relict of Otto von Roeder, who died last spring, and one of the oldest residents of Texas, having come here in 1836.⁵ The disease which caused her death was dropsy—*Valley Times*"

Theodore von Roeder's place of burial is unknown. The couple was survived by his son, Ludwig; her daughter, Adolphine Sack Clark of Banquete; and their children, Caroline von Roeder Curtis, George W. von Roeder and Otto, Jr. Henriette von Roeder Curtis died in 1869, and Fred von Roeder's date of death is unknown.

NOTES:

¹The Engelking letters are in the process of being translated.

²Perhaps that is why his remarks regarding her are so blunt.

³It was 1834.

⁴Although he was probably in the reserves, he was not at the battlefield.

⁵It was 1840.

This article appeared in the *Schulenburg Sticker*, June 14, 2001
Submitted by Rodney C. Koenig

Guettermann family has get-together

Descendants of Herman and Babette (Schuler) Guettermann gathered for their family reunion on April 29 at Rockin' W Ranch in Schulenburg. Hosts for the reunion were the Alvin and Martha (Guettermann) Warnken families – Kervin and Linda Warnken and Maynard and Sandi Warnken.

Kervin Warnken of Austin, president, called the meeting to order and said the prayer before the meal. There were approximately 60 people in attendance. The hosts provided barbecue brisket and members brought side dishes.

A moment of prayer was held for those who died this past year, including Robert Simper of Moulton who was killed in an accident.

Leera Guettermann, the oldest living member, had first choice of the door prizes and then all guests were awarded a prize.

During the afternoon, all family members were asked to give a brief update on their family, their work and/or retirement. Following the meeting, pictures were taken of all families present to add to the scrapbook for future generations to enjoy.

Election of officers was held. Junette Rodecap of Schulenburg was elected president, and Harlan Guettermann of Houston was elected secretary/treasurer.

The host for the next reunion on April 27, 2003, will be the family of Edwin Guettermann. The reunion will be held in Schulenburg at Rockin' W

Ranch.

Herman Guettermann was born Sept. 21, 1854 in Gieicherweisen, Germany, and immigrated to the United States in 1894, settling near Schulenburg, where he spent the remainder of his life. He married Babette Schuler on Aug. 20, 1894, in Schulenburg. She was born in Trappstadt, Germany, on Jan. 1, 1873, the daughter of Kasper and Helena Schuler. She came to this country at age 21 in 1894.

Herman died Feb. 8, 1950 and Babette died Dec. 26, 1951.

To them were born William Guettermann, Regina Guettermann Sternadel, Clara Guettermann Kalich, Martha Guettermann Warnken, and Edwin Guettermann, all deceased.

This article appeared in the San Antonio *Express-News*, March 4, 2001

Submitted by Frances Heimer Copeland

Perrin, Beitel families share history and a road

San Antonio is full of double-barreled street names: Perrin-Beitel, Jones-Maltsberger, Jackson-Keller, Vance Jackson and others.

As you guessed, most commemorate families or individuals who had homes or businesses at either end of the road.

These names started with casual use, referring most often to country roads that connected two homesteads. This is the case with Perrin-Beitel, which originally was anchored at each end by farms owned by two pioneer families.

Perrin-Beitel "was named long before the area was annexed to the city, so there are no known records regarding its history," says David Green in his unpublished manuscript on San Antonio-area street and community names.

According to Green's research, the Perrin and Beitel families "had substantial holdings where Nacogdoches and Perrin-Beitel (roads) now intersect."

Alphonse W. Perrin's end of the road was called Hope Farm. The story of how he got there is recounted in *Cemeteries of Bexar County, Texas, Volume 1* (1999, San Antonio Genealogical and Historical Society).

Born Feb. 23, 1848, in New York to Swiss immigrant parents, Perrin went to sea as a young man. At age 21, he turned up in Wisconsin, where he met his wife-to-be, Irish-born Nina Carr.

"He decided to settle in South Texas, so he went to Milwaukee to propose to Nina," says the reference. The couple married in Chicago and honeymooned on a Mississippi River paddle boat.

From St. Louis, the Perrins set off by Conestoga wagon for Texas, where they settled on 604 acres "situated between tributaries of Salado Creek, then located about 9.5 miles northeast of the city of San Antonio."

The second half of the street's name goes back even further. Joseph Beitel was born March 15, 1808, in Wirttemberg, Baden-Baden, Germany. "As a young man, (he) landed at Philadelphia and in 1830 was joined by Elizabeth Armhurst and married," says Beitel's entry in *San Antonio Obituary Notices: Transcribed from San Antonio Newspapers*, by S.W. Pease.

The young Beitel's traveled by ox-cart to Texas, stopping first at Houston. "Months later, (they) settled eight miles east of San Antonio."

This site turned out to be a less-than-peaceful spot. Joseph Beitel fought Comanches in the aftermath of the Council House Fight of 1840 and took part in the Battle of Salado in 1842, when Texas volunteers turned back an invading Mexican army.

In 1851, "Beitel started a farm on Salado and lived there the rest of his life" on 565 acres along the creek. In 1856, he won election as a Bexar County commissioner.

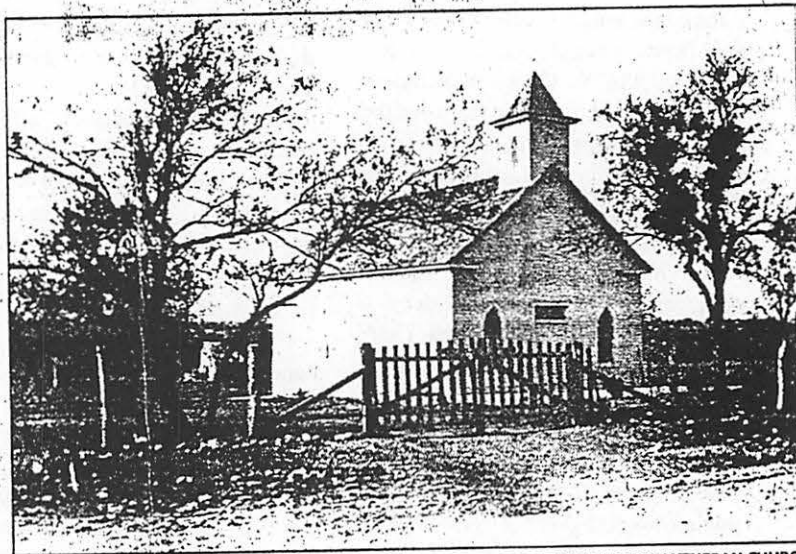
The couple had 10 children. Sons Frank J. and Albert Beitel "for years engaged in the lumber business and were very successful," says the hand-emended copy of the obituary transcriptions in the Institute of Texan Cultures library.

Joseph Beitel died Jan. 29, 1889, and his widow followed Nov. 28, 1903. Both are buried in a family plot in City Cemetery No. 1.

The Beitel name is perpetuated not only on street signs but also in Beitel Memorial Lutheran Church, 2515 Austin Highway at the intersection of Perrin-Beitel. This was the first Lutheran church in northeast San Antonio.

The largely German-American congregation had been served by pastors from St. John's Lutheran Church downtown. Beitel Memorial church histories record that the original property was a bequest of six acres of farmland from Elizabeth Beitel.

The Henry Beitel Lumber Co. donated the materials, and members of the congregation built a 50-foot-by-29-foot church in 1904. A new church structure replaced it in 1951, and the existing church was added on in 1969.



COURTESY OF BEITEL MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

According to records, property for the Beitel Memorial Lutheran Church was bequeathed by Elizabeth Beitel.

FROM MEMEL TO ROUND TOP IN FIVE MONTHS**By Dale U. von Rosenberg**

Note: On June 16, 2000, the author presented this paper before a conference at Bremerhaven, Germany, the port from which his ancestors departed for Texas in 1849. His purpose was to describe the long journey of the von Rosenberg family from East Prussia to their new home. During the conference, the author obtained a book containing a map of Bremerhaven, which is reproduced here. In that book was a 1857 advertisement by F. W. Boedeker, Jr., an agent who booked passages to the United States. This was the agent The von Rosenbergs used in 1849.

In the Spring of 1849, 27 year old Wilhelm von Rosenberg, a royal architect, was in Berlin supervising construction of school buildings he had designed. Wilhelm had been active in the movement to set up a unified Germany with a democratic government. As a result of this activity, he was discharged from his position and proscribed from further employment by the government. He was allowed to resign his commission in the army reserve so that he would not receive a dishonorable discharge. With no future in Prussia, he decided to emigrate to Texas.

Wilhelm's father, Carl, was opposed to his son's leaving Prussia and urged his eldest son to return to the family's home near Memel and help manage the estates. His father said he would emigrate with his whole family in a few years if the situation did not improve. However, the family waited only a few months, for they sailed from Bremerhaven for Galveston on October 8, 1849.

This trip and the first years in Texas are described in a series of letters which have been preserved, translated into English, and published by the family. Many of these letters were written by Carl's wife Amanda, with some by Carl, others by Wilhelm or by some of the younger children. This morning, I will tell about their trip. The family left their estate, Eckitten, near Memel on August 30, 1849, and the last members of their group arrived at their new home, Nassau plantation, near Round Top, Texas, on January 31, 1850.

Nine family members, the parents and seven children including Wilhelm, were in the party which left Memel. Johannes, another son who was an inspector in Saxony, joined the family in Berlin. While the others went on to Bremen, Wilhelm went to Saxony where he married his fiancée Auguste Anders. Wilhelm's sister Johanna and his friend Hermann Hellmuth accompanied him to the wedding. Hermann and Johanna fell in love and decided

to marry; so Hermann joined the family going to Texas. Bremen laws did not permit the marriage of an emigrant; so the two were married after they arrived in Galveston.

The family sailed from Memel across the Baltic, then up the Oder to the port of Stettin. Amanda was excited by all the new experiences on her travels. She told about her adventures with great delight. Along the Oder were the prettiest villages with here and there a tower protruding from the hills. The size and luxury of their rooms at the Hotel de Petersburg in Stettin embarrassed her, although she admitted the cost was considered cheap.

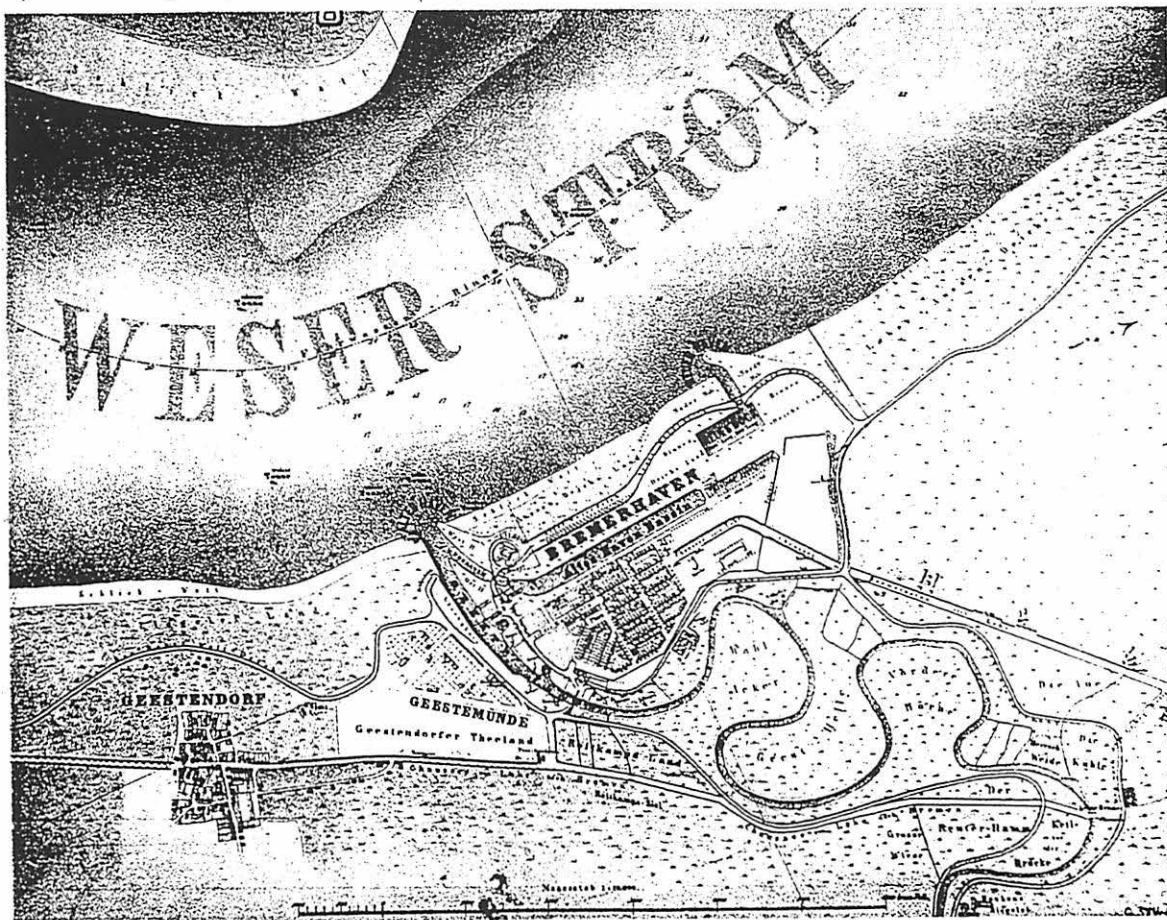
However, it was the locomotives on the railroad trains which they rode to Berlin and on to Bremen that terrified Amanda. She called them monsters and said that they come so fast that she had no time to be scared as they came rolling up, whistling, steaming. She was even apprehensive when their coach was hooked directly to the locomotive, but she had to keep quiet and show no fear to the children.

At Potsdam, they went to Sans Souci, which, Amanda said, would take many pages telling of the famous terraces, artistic fountains, and flowers. Her reaction was to say, "I have lived."

Then, the family departed for Bremen via Madgeburg and Braunschweig. They arrived in Bremen on September 4 and were later joined by the four from the wedding. Amanda described Bremen as a beautiful and happy city as perhaps none other in Europe - plenty wealth, no beggars, some transients. On October 2, they boarded the ship Franziska which sailed on the 8th.

Amanda described their quarters on the ship and told about some of their fellow passengers. Wilhelm gave more practical advice in his letters. He advised, "Stay in Bremen only a short while as no ship actually gets away on the announced starting date. Let your baggage arrive in Bremen on the same day as you arrive so that you can send it from the depot straight to the river boat which carries it out to Bremerhaven. As soon as you arrive there, go on board ship and establish quarters and sleep there so that board starts on the same day." In all, he gave several pages of advice.

Correspondence between Carl von Rosenberg and F. W. Boedeker, Jr., established the cost and schedules of the sailing. Despite Carl's counter offer, the price remained 80 Ld'or (louis d'or) and 2 Ld'or contribution to the poor for every adult and 20 Ld'or and 2 Ld'or for every person under 12. Also, each passenger was entitled to 20 cubic feet of baggage space. The family brought several wagons from Eckitten. Wilhelm stated that in going from San Felipe to Round Top, their luggage filled four ox-wagons; so they may have used more than the allotted



MAP OF BREMERHAVEN IN 1849

space. Three ships were mentioned, including the *Franziska* under Capt. Hagedorn. The family waited for the October sailing which was to be the last for Galveston that Fall.

The trip took two months; there were storms, and for two weeks, the ship was becalmed. Amanda described the motion of the ship, "watching the waves whipped up by the storm high as a mountain, our ship dips in front, now the waves reach it, the waves sink back, and again the same spectacle, the waves try to bury us but the good ship *Franziska* rises again."

The *Franziska* reached Galveston on December 6. Both Amanda and William (he used the English form upon arrival in Texas; so I will refer to him as William in the remainder of the paper) were impressed with the city of Galveston. Amanda wrote, "the city extends rather far out and makes a good showing with various buildings, churches high above, streets broad and long." William said, "Galveston surpasses by far my expectations. Stores contain mostly large stocks of goods, elegance prevails, as in Berlin and Leipzig." The family stayed at the Hotel Wilhelm Tell for a half dollar per day.

On December 11, Hermann Hellmuth and Johanna von Rosenberg were married. The next day, the party of twelve left for the interior. It took them the better parts of three days to reach the mouth of the Brazos River by mail coach. Amanda describes "a terrifying trip with the waves on one side and mountains of drift wood on the other." William also remarked on "great logs that various storms had brought there cast up by the mighty waves of the Gulf of Mexico." Carl called the trip "good and comfortable," although "three times we went over sizeable waters and the Brazos River on miserable ferries and boats."

Upon reaching Quintana at the mouth of the Brazos River, the family boarded the steamboat Washington which lay in port. "For three days, while the captain awaited more immigrants and especially freight from Galveston, we enjoyed hunting ducks, snipes, and cranes," wrote Carl. Amanda was most impressed by the Washington and compared it to accommodations in Europe. She wrote, "When we descended from the rooms of the Friedrich Wilhelm IV, how sumptuous they seemed to us. Let those who enjoy that there come to the Washington, which plies the winding Brazos. Let them ascend the high stairs, step into the wide entry with the giant smokestacks on each side. The glass doors open into a long spacious drawing room to receive guests. Eight stately windows along each side illuminate the room." It took five days to reach San Felipe de Austin. Amanda declared "These were the most pleasant days of my life."

None was impressed by San Felipe. Amanda called it miserable, burnt down by the Mexicans in the last war. William said that Felipe was "far below our expectations. When one is in Felipe, one must really hunt Felipe, as one can't believe a Felipe exists." Carl said "in the Texas Revolution, Felipe was ravaged and burned; hence we found only bad housing into which it rained." However, the women and children stayed in San Felipe for the better part of a month while the men rode horseback as far west as Bastrop, about 85 miles, to locate and purchase their new home.

Carl and William made two trips between Bastrop and LaGrange, and William rode back to San Felipe to get the money to purchase their land. Carl finally arranged to purchase the manor house and 800 acres of the Nassau Plantation from Otto von Roeder for \$1800. Nassau had been built and developed by the Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas (Verein zum Schutze deutscher Einwander in Texas) known simply as the Adelsverein. The Adelsverein was responsible for bringing many German immigrants to Texas, but it was poorly managed and went bankrupt. Otto von Roeder had obtained title to Nassau from the Adelsverein in payment of debts. William bought a smaller farm nearby as did Hermann Hellmuth. The men then returned to San Felipe to bring the families to their new homes.

The trip from San Felipe to Nassau was not without incident. Ten members of the family went with horse-drawn wagons and took

three days. Amanda described how Carl took a wrong turn and got lost from the rest and had to spend one night in the open. One wagon got bogged down and had to be pulled out with extra horses. William and Auguste came with the ox-wagons, and their trip took five days. The two cooked on an open fire and camped out under open sky each night. William noted that this did not present great unpleasantness if one was provided with some woolen covers. They arrived on January 31, 1850, five months after the family left Eckitten.

It is clear that the family brought a large amount of money with them. Soon after their arrival in Texas, Carl became known as "the old rich man von Rosenberg," much to the annoyance of his wife Amanda. Amanda did write about Texas that "there is no stealing; we could have carried a fortune with us without worry." Carl had sold Eckitten Estate, although since it was sold quickly, it must have been sold at a loss. Son Johannes was so embittered at the loss that he left for America with the vow never to be heard from again in Germany. Indeed it was nearly thirty years before he wrote his first letter there.

Added in July: The "Quadriga," the sculpture atop the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin was taken to Paris by Napoleon in 1806. It was returned to Berlin by the Prussians under Blucher after Waterloo. Surely, Carl, who fought at Waterloo, showed his family the "Quadriga." After learning this history during our visit to Berlin, I found in Amanda's letters this statement: "I saw nothing of Berlin except the famous monument."

"FRIEDRICH GRASMAYER" by Larry K. Ripper
This article appeared May 3, 2001, in the Schulenburg Stickler

Fredrich William Grasmeyer was one of the first Europeans immigrating to Stephen F. Austin's Colony. From *Austin's Register of Families*: "F. W. Grasmeyer, single man, age 30, trader, no slaves, origin Germany, oath taken March 1831." Grasmeyer's land grant was south of and adjoining the Colorado River, just east of present day Smithville. For a time he operated a ferry, a river landing and cotton gin at that location.

On December 14, 1837, President Houston signed a bill creating Fayette County, part of which had been in the Mexican Municipality of Mina. Grasmeyer's Ferry was chosen as the boundary dividing Bastrop and Fayette counties and "running from there in a northeasterly direction at right angles with the general course of the

River Colorado, to the divide between the water of the Colorado and Brazos, and southwesterly to the head of the Lavaca..."

In the early 1850's Grasmeyer moved to La Grange, by then a growing financial center. Over the next 30 years he would be involved in several businesses, investment ventures and many real estate deals. He was also a partner in "Oroy Plata," a New Mexico silver mine.

Today, one of his most visible contributions to La Grange is the old Beer Office and Bottling Company Building at 114 South Main. Grasmeyer commissioned German-Texan stonemasons to construct this Italianate style commercial building in 1865. This structure served as a hotel until 1893, when it became a regional sales office

for a brewery. Later it would be used to house a soft drink bottling operation, followed by a succession of other businesses. At the time of his death, in 1877, Grasmeyer had substantial holdings throughout central Texas. He left \$1,200 and his extensive personal library to start a library association in La Grange. His instructions: "Only standard works of scientific literature and literature are to be purchased and not 'current books' of inferior value. No secretarian literature will be bought." Several outstanding loans were held by Grasmeyer's estate, one owed by Elizabeth Ney, the famous artist whose work stands in the Texas capital today. Her note was for \$325, 8% interest, unsecured.

Today Fredrich Grasmeyer's imposing monument stands in the west-end of the old La Grange City Cemetery.

**Book Review: VOYAGE TO NORTH AMERICA 1844-45 [The Texas Diary of Prince Carl of Solms] translated by Wolfram M. Von-Maszewski
Reviewed by Charles Patrick**

This book contains the first English translation of Prince Carl of Solm's personal diary. The entries span the period beginning with his departure from Germany in mid May 1844 until his return visit to New York in late June of 1845. The majority of this often-cryptic diary deals with Prince Carl's journey through Texas as the emissary of the Adelsverein or "Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas". By itself, the diary would be difficult for the average reader to comprehend. This, however, is solved by the extensive and well researched footnoting provided by Wolfram M. Von-Maszewski, the book's translator and editor. In fact, Von-Maszewski's annotations are so extensive that the reader probably has more information about the people, places, and events mentioned in the diary than the Prince ever knew himself. This copious footnoting at the end of each of the chapters does, however, require a great deal of flipping back and forth in order to get a clear understanding of the diary's significance. For this reason this book should be considered more of a tool for the serious researcher than a book intended for the casual reader.

The Society in Germany sent the Prince to Texas to pave the way for thousands of potential German immigrants to settle here in the 1840's. Prince Carl recounts his encounters with the leaders of the Republic of Texas as well as with the ordinary people he encountered during his journey. The diary also illustrates some interesting aspects of Prince Carl's personality and attitudes. Even though he was forced to leave his much beloved fiancée, Princess Sophie (whose picture appears in the book) behind in Germany, a number of the entries reveal that Prince Carl, who was in his early thirties at the time, had a roving eye for the ladies and did not hesitate to record his impressions of the often flirtatious women he met.

This book also contains numerous maps that retrace the exact route taken by Prince Carl during his stay in Texas as well as period prints of people and places mentioned in the diary. As an appendix to the book, Von-Maszewski has included his translation of the diary of Bourgeois d'Orvanne, the Colonial Director of the Society, who accompanied the Prince during his stay in Texas. This second diary, which was written in a narrative style, is easier to understand and requires far fewer footnotes. The appendix also contains a report written by Prince Carl for Queen Victoria of England. In this report, written after his return to Germany in 1845, the Prince expressed his dislike for the "dirty American democracy" as he called it. He apparently believed that the expansion of the United States would lead to the demise of Great Britain and other European powers. To counterbalance this growing American influence in the mid nineteenth century, Prince Carl advocated the institution of a European-backed monarchy in Mexico, with the recently created German colonies in Texas acting as a buffer state under the control of Britain. Unfortunately, he did not foresee that Germany and Britain would be locked in mortal combat 70 years later during World War One.

Voyage to North America, 1844-45; Wolfram M. Von-Maszewski, translator, editor, introduction by Theodore Gish; 256 pages; published by University of North Texas Press; ISBN 1-57441-124-1; \$32.50

Book Review: **GERMAN BOY: A REFUGEE'S STORY** by Wolfgang W. E. Samuel
Reviewed by the Publisher (University Press of Mississippi)

UNIVERSITY PRESS OF

Mississippi

German Boy:
A Refugee's Story
By Wolfgang W. E. Samuel
University Press of Mississippi
\$30.00, hardback, ISBN 1-57806-274-8

Survivor of Germany's defeat and occupation
recalls horrors of war and quest for freedom

In the last days of the war-ravaged Third Reich, ten-year-old Wolfgang W. E. Samuel and his mother, Hedy, fled the Russian Army and hid from American bombs.

Samuel and his mother survived six years in occupied Germany, then escaped to the United States. After retiring as a colonel in the United States Air Force, he wrote *German Boy: A Refugee's Story* (University Press of Mississippi, \$30 hardback), hailed by the *New York Times Book Review* as a "compelling memoir" propelled by "a profusion of living detail" and "the ever-recurring historical truth that the innocent usually pay for the sins committed by others."

Samuel said, "My mother and I never once spoke of those days after coming to the United States. It was as if we two had escaped from our personal hell, so why would we want to go back and relive even a small part of it?" But when he retired he found the space and time needed to write. "I simply didn't want our experiences to be forgotten. I wanted to record our small corner of chaos and redemption for the next generation."

Rather than diminishing Samuel's recall, the years of suppressing his refugee experience sharpened his memory. "What still astounds me is how easily those years came back," he said. "Writing the scenes became like a movie running before my eyes, with me as one of the actors. I felt real fear and horror again, the smell of death came back into my nostrils. I sometimes sat at my keyboard and felt the tears running down my face."

Reviewers have resoundingly praised the quality of his memoir. *Kirkus Reviews* said "Samuel's portrait of life in Germany (especially in the innocent days before the Third Reich crumbled) is lovely and evocative and manages to humanize German civilians under Hitler ... his prose sings."

Publishers Weekly wrote, "The author's memoir vividly depicts what it was like to be a child refugee (confused and frightened) in postwar Germany, constantly searching for food and haven ... He has produced an engrossing and powerful narrative." *Library Journal* praised the book as well calling it "... a gripping account of war, hunger, sickness, rape, and abuse—literally a race with death. Samuel vividly describes the refugee life of deprivation and humiliation.... This deeply emotional and moving memoir clearly illustrates that the military collapse of Nazi Germany was eclipsed by the greater tragedy of the German nation. Highly recommended."

Wolfgang W. E. Samuel was commissioned through the Air Force ROTC at the University of Colorado and is a graduate of the National War College. He served in the U.S. Air Force for thirty years until his retirement in 1985 as a colonel. His writing has been published in several military journals, including *Parameters*, the U.S. Army War College quarterly.

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ANTI-GERMAN SENTIMENT FOLLOWING WORLD WAR I

By Mabel Loesch

Unless a fatality was involved, hate crimes against Texans of German descent were rarely reported in the newspapers in the years immediately after World War I. Consequently, it is important to collect the family stories, passed down through several generations by now, of this part of our German heritage before it disappears entirely. There are several such stories in my family.

A small group of Germans lived near Coryell City, in Coryell County, clustered around St. John's Lutheran Church. Most of them had moved there from the Brenham, Texas, area shortly after the turn of the century. They were a cohesive group, all farmers (some rather prosperous), who spoke German in their homes and in their church. The "English" who surrounded them regarded them with antipathy. Fueled, no doubt, by World War I, they became quite antagonistic towards the Germans.

In January 1921 St. John's Lutheran Church was destroyed by fire. Origin of the fire was questioned. Walter Gohlke, who was 16 at the time and who still lives within sight of the rebuilt church, says the fire happened on a very windy night, and was probably caused by fire left in the stove after a young peoples' meeting at the church. Others say the pastor was known to leave his lit pipe lying around, and perhaps that caused the fire. But many whispered that the "English" had set the fire.

Several months later, my grandfather, Carl Niemeier was sitting on his front porch on a Sunday morning, just a half-mile from St. John's Church. Services had apparently been suspended for a time. I heard that this was done as there were the threats towards them because of the German language used during worship. Some of his sons and grandsons had just returned from rabbit hunting, and had propped their guns up on the front porch and were in the process of cleaning them when a group of men "with their faces covered" came riding by and stopped at the front gate. They paused there for a bit, then apparently changed their minds and went on down the road and attacked Mr. Symank. They tied him up and drug him behind a horse. Though he was injured, he was not killed.

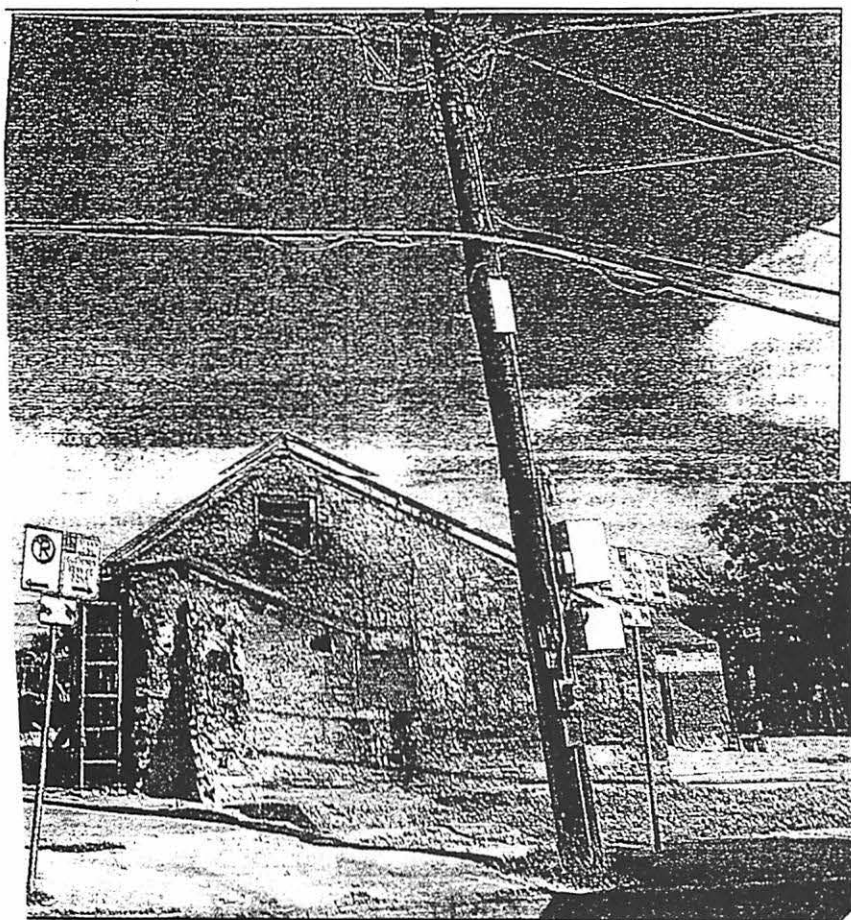
I know of another earlier incident. Sometime in the summer of 1919 my uncle Henry Niemeier was courting Floy Sparkman. One evening after he took her home, he was attacked by a group of "English." They apparently objected to his courting one of "their" young ladies. He was severely beaten, then thrown into his buggy, and his horse took him home. Aunt Minnie Niemeier told of hearing him come home, but feeling that something did not sound right. So she went out and found him lying unconscious in the buggy. The story does have a happy ending: Henry and Floy got married in September 1919.

Apparently, not all of the anti-German sentiment started after World War I. In about 1910, my uncle Bill Niemeier was spending Saturday night in a tavern in McGregor, Texas. Several "English" questioned his right to be there and attacked him. They said they were going to shoot him. Uncle Bill held open his jacket and told them to go ahead. One man did shoot, but just at that moment some one joggled his arm. The shot took off a button on Uncle Bill's jacket.

No doubt there are other stories of Germans being victimized because they were Germans. But few of these incidents are documented. I would like to collect family stories of how German families or individuals were targeted by organized or unorganized groups, especially following World War I. You may e-mail your story to me at mloesch@bellsouth.net or mail it to me at 2140 E. Scott St., Pensacola, FL 32503.

This article appeared in the Austin American-Statesman, October 14, 2000
Submitted by Anita Killen

After the Alamo



A stone house
on Fifth Street
connects Austin with
Susanna Dickinson –
the survivor who lived
here for a quarter-century

Deborah Cannon/AA-5
After she survived the battle of the Alamo, Susanna Dickinson found her way to Austin. Her house on East Fifth Street was encased within the walls of a barbecue restaurant, and now is being moved to make way for a convention center hotel.

By **BRAD BUCHHOLZ**
American-Statesman Staff



A stone house stands downtown, on East Fifth Street, at the fringe of a demolition site near the Austin Convention Center. The house is brand new to our eyes: Yet it is older than we know. And it is historically unique — for within the vacant shell of this broken building that smells of smoky barbecue, Austin meets the Alamo.

Look at it now, for it will not be with us this way for much longer. And consider: Long ago, in the 1870s, it was the home of a furniture maker named Joseph W. Hannig and his wife, Susanna — a woman Texas historians know as Susanna Dickinson, the most famous survivor of the battle of the Alamo.

Susanna Dickinson. . . in Austin? It's hard to imagine, for her story is so often framed, exclusively, within the events of February and March 1836 — when she and her 15-month-old daughter, Angelina, took refuge in the Alamo with her husband, artillery captain Almaron Dickinson of Tennessee. During the battle, she cooked and cared for Texas soldiers. During the siege, she hid within the famous chapel. After the fall, the young mother and her daughter — “The

Babe of the Alamo” — were spared by Mexican General Santa Anna.

Generations of Texas schoolchildren know the story. But very few realize that Susanna Dickinson spent the last 26 years of her life in Travis County — mostly in Austin — and that it was easily the most comfortable and secure period of her most tumultuous life. A simple stone house reminds us. . . .

Her home has stood in Austin longer than the Capitol dome. Yet the Dickinson-Hannig House has been invisible to us for the last half-century, its stone facade encased within the shell of a downtown barbecue joint known as The Pit. Last month, however, the modern walls of the restaurant were torn away — that demolition project, in full swing — revealing what city officials now describe as the oldest surviving residential structure in downtown Austin.

A sliver of history, reclaimed. Consider it now, for we will not have the chance to see it this way for much longer.



Austin was 19 blocks tall, north to south, in 1870 — by the time Susanna Dickinson had moved into the broad one-story limestone house on 501 E. Fifth Street. City population: 4,428. The University of Texas did not exist. The railroad was here, though. From her

front door, Dickinson could see the tiny passenger depot — across the street, half a block west. The only tracks in town ran in front of her house.

Fifth Street was known as Pine Street in those days. Susanna Dickinson, then 56 years old, was known simply as Mrs. J. W. Hannig. She'd been living in relative anonymity in Austin since 1862 and had been married for 13 years. It was a man's world in the 19th century — and Hannig was a prominent one, a young German immigrant who ran a furniture store on Pecan (Sixth) Street.

During her Austin years, Dickinson was described as a woman with dark hair, usually in curls, and blue eyes. She was a large woman, a good cook. Family legend has it that Hannig — 20 years her junior, born the same year as Angelina — fell in love with Dickinson upon tasting her cabbage, bacon and cornbread. It is also family legend that Mrs. Hannig sold gifts of land, settlements from the Alamo received in the 1850s, to help establish her husband in business. Her life was a good and prosperous one — which is the legacy of the stone house in downtown Austin. There is no appreciating Susanna Dickinson's home without an understanding of how many sad houses she had known before it.

Dickinson hadn't just survived the Alamo by the time she moved here; she had also survived a life of heartache and poverty. Illiterate, penniless and exiled from her native Tennessee, Dickinson had lost everything at the Alamo — except for her daughter Angelina. Her first petitions for financial aid were denied. Needing a man's support to survive, she drifted toward Houston.

Dickinson married four times by the time she was 33. Her first husband perished in the Alamo. The second beat her. The third drank himself to death. The fourth accused her of prostitution and adultery. The widow of the Alamo apparently lived for a time in a Houston brothel, in the 1840s. Yet she also befriended Baptist minister Rufus C. Burleson, who would become the second president of Baylor University. Her baptism, in Buffalo Bayou, was reportedly attended by 1,500 people in 1849.

HER HUSBAND WAS A PROMINENT BUSINESSMAN AND A GERMAN IMMIGRANT

Aware that Dickinson was struggling, the Texas Legislature considered (but did not pass) a bill that sought to provide financial aid for 14-year-old Angelina in 1849. One speaker, E.H. Winfield, said he had "never lost sight" of mother and daughter, whom he considered "sacred and holy," since the fall of the Alamo. "Time and again," he said, "have I begged the mother in vain to give me that child, that my wife might raise it with my own daughter."

For a time — it's not known exactly when, or for how long — Susanna Dickinson raised two of her daughter's young children, including one named for her. Dickinson had finally found a stable home life, having married Hannig in Lockhart in 1857. And at last, she'd come into possession of land once owned by her first husband, near Gonzales.

The Hannigs moved into a modest house at 203 Sabine St. in Austin in the early 1860s — but it is not known if Angelina ever saw it. The "Babe of the Alamo" had drifted away, first to New Orleans, later to Galveston. She lived recklessly. She aided victims of a yellow fever epidemic. She remarried and gave birth to a fourth child. And she died, of a uterine hemorrhage, at age 34.

"She lived the life of a courtesan, and died so last night," read the simple obituary of "Em Britton" — as she was known then — in a Galveston newspaper. The year: 1869. The same year Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Hannig purchased the land at 501 E. Pine St. and began to build their new stone house.

❖ ❖

Today, the Dickinson-Hannig House sits within the proposed footprint of a \$220 million, 800-room convention center hotel. Every structure on its block is coming down. But for a while longer, Susanna Dickinson's limestone residence — which is not a protected historical structure — stands alone in the open air, surrounded by a chain link security fence, the occasional archaeologist, men in hard hats and earth-moving equipment.

The Dickinson-Hannig House was impressive for its day, with walls more than a foot thick. The broad facade, almost 50 feet long, was crafted with a touch of western elegance; the rough rubble stones were cut smooth. Tall doors and windows faced the street. There were porches, a fireplace, 12-foot ceilings over the front rooms — and behind the bedrooms, to the south, a second stone building believed to have contained a kitchen.

Though it stands across the street from the southern boundary of Austin's downtown historic district, the Dickinson-Hannig

House will not be preserved in its present state — for it is caught in a tug of war between inner-city development and historical preservation. Early this summer, the Landmark Commission pursued historic zoning for the structure — only to withdraw the request July 10.

The bottom line: The city and the hotel developer — known, ironically, as the Landmark Organization — have decided to compromise. For now, they agree the house will be neither demolished nor preserved in its original location. The proposal on the table: Disassemble the house in four sections, put it into storage for a year or two — and then, sometime before 2003, haul it into the lobby of the completed Hilton hotel.

Landmark has already drafted such a proposal onto a set of blueprints. The house — or a portion of it — would be located beneath an escalator in the lobby. And while Stocklin would prefer that the building be "saved," as is, perhaps it's poetic destiny. The old house, so long encased within the walls of a barbecue joint, becomes once again a house *within* a house. . . .



In Austin, Dickinson was married to a merchant named Joseph W. Hannig.

Susanna Dickinson and her husband lived in the stone house on Fifth Street for at least four years — and perhaps as long as eight. Since she could neither read or write, there are no letters left behind describing her life there. But these were clearly prosperous days. Hannig was elected alderman. He owned downtown property. Angelina's teen-age son, Joe — named for Joseph Hannig — worked as an apprentice in his grandfather's Sixth Street shop. The Hannigs bought a second house on Pine Street, in 1873, perhaps for his immigrant sister and her large

German family.

By 1878, the Hannigs had moved to the country, on a hilltop, into a two-story house overlooking a bountiful peach orchard. This house — their last house — is long gone. But we know the area today as the hill near 32nd and Duval streets, just north of the UT campus.

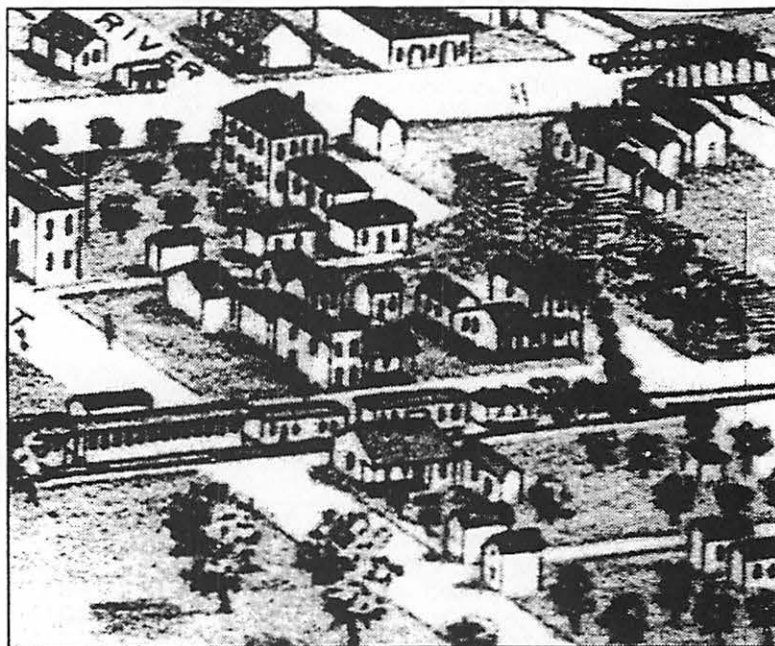
On March 5, 1878, the Daily Democratic Statesman reported that "Mr. and Mrs. Hannig" and their family took in a night of theater at the Austin Opera House. The play: A story of Davy Crockett, with an actor named Frank Mayo in the lead role. It was a touring production, and the Hannigs attended at the actor's invitation.

"Mrs. Hannig is the only American survivor of the Alamo Massacre unless Ben, the body servant of Col. Travis, still lives," it was written in the Statesman. "Ben, though black, was a true American. Mrs. Hannig, in the Alamo, occupied an apartment next to that of Crockett, who was addicted to the fiddle and hard swearing when shut up within the walls."

The same spring, an Ohio newspaperman met Susanna Hannig "and her daughters" (sic) at their beautiful Austin home — "on one of those commanding sightly locations for which Austin is noted, overlooking the city and the surrounding country." On this visit, he recorded Dickinson's reminiscence of the Alamo — and the Statesman ran much of his dispatch.

"Mrs. Hannig is an intelligent woman of excellent memory and is perhaps not far from 60 years of age, although but few gray hairs are yet noticeable on her head," it was reported. "She engaged cheerfully in conversation about that dark episode in her history, which robbed her of her husband and partially of her reason for a time. As she conversed, she seemed at times to stop as if in a sort of reverie or dream, and I fancied I saw a sort of wild light dancing in her eyes as if in excitement, and indeed it would not be strange, for her recital of the events of that dreadful day will excite the most stolid listener."

In the end, he wrote: "She says she has never since seen the Alamo nor has she desired to. It has but memories of horror to her. The little child that through all that scene of carnage clung to its dumb stricken mother's neck only survived a short time. To the credit of the State it may be said that this widow of a brave soldier was remembered with a magnificent gift of land, and it is my humble wish that she may be spared many long years to enjoy her beautiful, peaceful home."



Austin History Center/Austin Public Library

In this 1873 map of downtown Austin, the home just south of the train is the Dickinson-Hannig house.

Susanna Hannig died five years later, in Austin, on Oct. 7, 1883. Two of her grandchildren — Almaron and Joe — would make their home in Austin, ensuring a strong presence of the Dickinson bloodline here throughout the 20th century. The most famous survivor of the Alamo is buried in Austin, in the southern edge of Oakwood Cemetery. The marker is a whisper away from Angelina Street.

On her grave stone, a message: "I go to prepare a place for thee." And though J.W. Hannig would marry again, he was laid to rest beside Susanna in 1890. On the sculpted rock of his monument, a banner reads: "My husband." It is part of lore that their markers rest closer together than any two gravestones in the entire cemetery.

It would seem easy to find those markers today, given such

a clue. But an hour before sunset, in the grand cemetery, they are lost in the sea of headstones. It is easy to stumble upon the gray monuments to Zilker, and Scarborough, and Rather, and Pease. But Susanna Hannig . . . tonight, it is as though she is not here.

Downtown, a stone house stands on East Fifth Street. It is

new to our eyes, yet older than we know. Consider it now — for we will not have the chance to see it this way for much longer.

JOSEPH W. HANNIG WAS A GERMAN IMMIGRANT WHO RAN A FURNITURE STORE ON SIXTH STREET. IT IS HIS HOUSE THAT THIS ARTICLE IS ABOUT.

• The Dickinson-Hannig house still has its original walls. City officials say
• the building is the oldest surviving residential structure in downtown
• Austin. The house will be moved during construction on the Hilton.

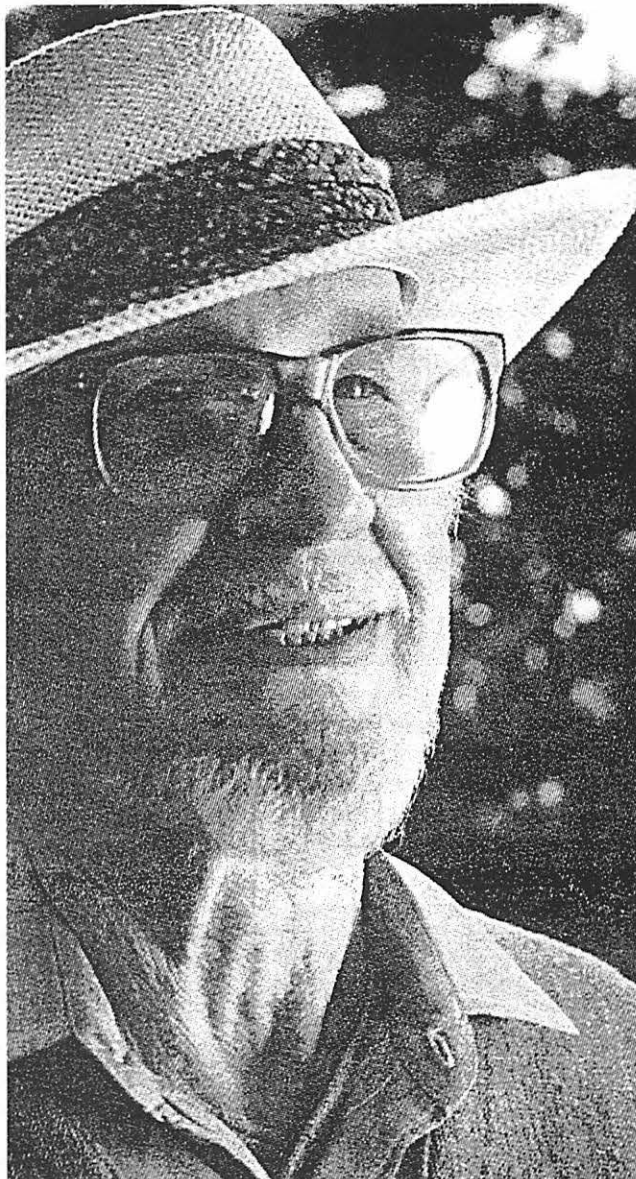
"LEGACIES: OTTO HOFMANN AGE 82" by Laura Barton
THIS ARTICLE APPEARED IN THE JANUARY 2001 ISSUE OF GOOD LIFE
Submitted by Margret Hofmann

Sitting at the head of a lunch table at the South Austin Senior Activity Center, a tall, lanky man talks animatedly. A boutonniere of oak leaves pokes through the button hole of his sweater. Strong artistic hands gesticulate, sculpting the air like a conductor. It's not difficult to spot Otto Hofmann. Today, the octogenarian "conducts" lunch, surrounded by a circle of friends whose stories he's quick to relate as he makes introductions—Ken's daughter is an opera singer, currently performing the role of the Abbess in *The Sound of Music*; Nick is a former newsman who once served as press secretary to Governor John Connally. This quintessential storyteller knows all too well that everyone has a story.

Hofmann's own story begins eighteen thousand years ago when the Ice Age was receding in Northern Europe. He holds a doctorate in physics and is steeped in history. He explains that his Celtic ancestors migrated to Germany as the glaciers melted. He then jumps to 781 AD and the slaughter of "heathens," those who believed in Germanic gods, by the Christian leader Charlemagne. Hofmann says Charlemagne had determined that the only way to successfully conquer the pagan Saxons was to make Christians out of them. "He invited them to a picnic in a meadow; I've been to that meadow." Once the tribes were assembled, Charlemagne's archers stood up and shot all the men, and those who survived the arrows were beheaded. "Because Charlemagne was a Christian, he didn't kill the women and girls," Hofmann continues. "instead he marched them through the Weser River, getting them good and wet. On the other side, a priest said '*In nomine Patris et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti.*' you're now baptized and you're Christians." he loosely translates, making

the sign of the cross. "One of my ancestors was a pregnant woman and that's the only reason I'm here," he concludes with an air of satisfaction.

Post lunch, the inveterate storyteller, who boasts hundreds of tales in his repertoire, adjourns to the center's piano. A classically-trained musician (Did I mention his master's degree in choral conducting?) Hofmann plays to the delight of his peers. A smile hijacks his face as a friend, ninety-nine-year-old Eula Matthews, sashays around the room to the strains of a waltz. Phrases like "Renaissance man" and "scholar and a gen-



tleman" tumble into mind. This is a man with a huge, insatiable appetite for life.

The son of hardworking German immigrants, Hofmann was reared on a cotton farm near the small communities of Uhland and Niederwald, southeast of Austin. The bilingual Hofmann uses the German pronunciation, then adds brief history: "Uhland and Niederwald really means lower forest...there's not a tree in the place!" he says, chortling.

Hofmann's father, a steam engineer, taught his eager youngest child how to work with metal and wood, and how to use his mind. While studying the poems of Schiller, the writings of Goethe, and classical music (Hofmann reports that there were so many children they had a family choir, but that's another story) young Otto worked in the farm's foundry and machine shop, rebuilding a Model T engine when he was a mere ten years old. These seemingly disparate skills would serve Hofmann well when he

embarked on his career as an organ maker.

How did this university-trained physicist become an organ maker? That too is a story. It was all about principles.

A dedicated pacifist and Quaker, Hofmann attended the University of Texas as a Plan II student and received a broad liberal arts education. As a grad student he engaged in acoustics research. During the war, he was implored to continue his research in underwater acoustics at Harvard. Realizing that the Pentagon-sponsored research was designed to detect submarines and further the war effort, Hofmann abandoned academics and became a conscientious objector. He performed alternative service during WW II, including a stint in a mental hospital working with violent patients.

When the war ended Hofmann started producing pipe organs "in a modest way." Thirty years later, Hofmann had become the leading American authority on pipe organs. He credits his German heritage and language skills with his success in spearheading a revival of the North German organ. Prior to this movement, the only companies that made organs produced them for the motion picture industry. Hofmann says, "Great literature for organs is Bach and his contemporaries. It's all polyphonic music...several different melodies mixed together—a fugue or toccata." For this reason, says Hofmann, movie organs were not useful in churches where harmonies are employed. "My organs are so good for congregational singing," he proudly proclaims, "you get a lust to sing."

So successful was Hofmann's career in organ building that he became the first American to join the elite International Society of Organ Builders, later achieving another first by becoming president of the organization.

Along with manufacturing hundreds of pipe organs that are located around the

world and training hundreds of apprentices, the walking goodwill ambassador was on the permanent board of the Texas Conference of Churches. Through this association Hofmann had the unparalleled honor of a private audience with Pope John Paul I. Sitting in the Vatican, the lanky Texan shared cakes and coffee, as well as his views on opposition to the death penalty, with the pontiff.

Twenty-two years later Hofmann's eyes brim with tears as he recalls the event. "It was the most profound experience," he begins, voice choking with emotion. "He was a normal human being. I was a Quaker. He was a Roman Catholic. But he gave me one hundred percent of his attention." Shaking his head as he recalls the event, he explains. "He didn't have to do that. There were a billion Catholics on his shoulders. All the Catholics I knew just revered the Pope and here I was doing this very personal thing...eating with the Pope. He was such an humble man."

Shortly afterwards, Hofmann embarked for Amsterdam to attend the International Congress where he would be elected to lead the organ builders' society, beating out Europeans with titles and lengthy heritages in organ building. Stepping off the train, Hofmann was met by friends who delivered the tragic news to the stunned American: the Pope had just died. "I was probably the last person to talk with him," Hofmann reflects incredulously. "amazing. just amazing."

Amazing would be an apropos word to describe Hofmann's life and, in his opinion, it just keeps getting better. "If I'd known that old age was so exciting, I'd have gotten older sooner," crows the indefatigable Hofmann. "I so enjoy meeting people and last year I started a new career acting in movies."

Hofmann says he was recently tapped for a role in a Richard Linklater's new film called *Waking Life*.

"The whole idea of the film is: don't get bitter when you get old," he says, then states his simple prescription for avoiding bitterness: "...try to stay away from negativity...always be positive." Warming to the explanation he tags on the sage advice, "If a new adventure comes along...go for it!"

As Hofmann strides out to his old Oldsmobile, whose bumper advertises his self-proclaimed "yella dog democrat" identification and personal philosophy expressed by another sticker that reads "Swords into Plowshares," he places a straw plantation hat jauntily on his head. This King of Tangents, who flows easily from one tale to the next, offers one for the road. While performing acoustical work on a church designed by the late, great Frank Lloyd Wright, Hofmann, a hat fancier, admired the man's *chapeau*. To his utter amazement, the famous architect removed the hat from his head and handed it to Hofmann saying, "Here, you can have it." ❀

**Otto Hofmann
died in May of
this year. See
In Memoriam
in this issue of
the Journal.**

AN INTERVIEW WITH JULIA MELLENBRUCH
By Ann Stuijbergen

Note: This is the second of five interviews of German-Texan Heritage Society members completed by Ann Stuijbergen as a project fulfilling the requirements for a Girl Scout Gold Award while a student at Bowie High School in Austin.

ANN: First I'm going to ask you a few questions about the German language and how you used it in your childhood and throughout your life. So first of all, what language were you originally educated in?

JULIA English. However I learned to speak German before I spoke English, but I was soon introduced to English also.

A: Did you speak German mostly in the home?

J: No but my grandfather did, and I visited him and I spent a lot of time with him. Up until the age of four I spent a lot of time with my grandparents, and he spoke English but he also spoke German to me because he wanted me to learn it.

A: Did the majority in your town speak German or did they speak English?

J: My parents?

A: No, the majority in your town or your community

J: Oh well, when I was seven we moved to a community and no German was spoken.

A: At all?

J: None. But up until age seven. I'll tell you the experience that we had. We moved to Taylor when I was four. We lived in Pflugerville on the farm and at age four we moved to Taylor, and this was in 1920 and it was a time when there was a lot of antagonism towards Germans. And my mother said "there will be no more German spoken in this house." I could go to grandpa's and speak German but I was not to speak German in Taylor, although there were a lot of Germans that lived there and they went to church and they heard German in church but there was so much animosity towards Germans in the community. Even the Ku Klux Klan were opposed to the Germans. So you had to be very careful about using the language. It was not acceptable in the community. It was just one of those things.

A: Right. Can you tell me some ways that you used the German in your childhood?

J: Well we used it for all our household things when I was with my grandparents.

A: So that's the only

J: Yeah and that's what it was at that particular time. I had older cousins on my mother's side. I was the only oldest grandchild of my father's parents and so they spoke German to me of course. My other cousins lived in the community and they also spoke English. They spoke German as well as English and they taught me English very young. My mother and dad used English with me although they both spoke German.

A: Right, they just didn't want to speak it ...

J: They, well, they were really frightened over the situation because it just wasn't a happy situation in those years and right after WWI it was much worse than it was after WWII.

A: Really?

J: I had the experience, oh, I didn't have this experience but I was told this story that I had an uncle who lived in Hutto, Texas, which was between Pflugerville and Taylor and he had his young son with him in the drugstore one day and his little boy said "Ein glas Wasser bitte!" And the person behind the counter came and socked my uncle in the jaw because, see, he didn't know what he was talking about. See, the kid didn't know that, he was used to saying that at home. So, and there were things like that made it unpleasant, so you can understand. A lot of people did not have that experience - Fredricksburg, New Braunfels - but in this area the Ku Klux Klan was pretty strong and they did not like anything German!

A: They were anti-almost everything! What part of Germany did your family come from?

J: Well, they came from different parts. One family came from Langwarden which is right on the North Sea and they were Fressians. My one grandfather came from near Bremen, Schoenemoor, it's a little bity community. He was the grandfather. The other one of them was a great grandfather that came from, that was Fressian. Another great great grandfather came from Hessen and that was a small village. Also it was Altenhasungen near Kassel and it was in that vicinity. So you could get that. Another great grandfather came from Woerlitz on the Elbe River, you know where that is? It's near Dessau. Can you place that? North of Leipzig. Then the other one, the other great great grandfather, came from a place up on the Baltic sea. I've never been up there on that area, Mecklenburg area. You know where that is?

A: Yes.

J: Okay, so none of them were from Bavaria. They were northern German and they were all Protestant.

A: What part of Texas did your family originally move to?

J: When they came from Indianola in 1844 they settled here in Austin.

A: Oh really!

J: And later moved to Bee Caves right out of Austin. That's one family. The other family came directly here to Austin and my great great grandfather Pfluger had a brother-in-law who fought in the Texas revolution. He went back to Germany but he was given 960 acres of land. So my great great grandfather purchased that from him before he went back to Germany. That was out at Pflugerville. He was Pfluger family and it was out east of Pflugerville. There wasn't any Pflugerville in those days but I mean where Pflugerville is now but it was about 5 miles east where that 960 acres was. So that's where they settled. Then my grandfather Klattenhoff came directly from Germany and he had an older brother that had settled right on the border between Williamson county but just across the border from Travis County near Hutto.

A: Why did they choose to leave Germany and come here?

J: Well, we've been told, I don't know why the Bohls came, the ones who were the Fressians, because they came with Prince Solms that went to New Braunfels but they never went to New Braunfels. They came in 1844 with one of the first ships of Prince Solms' group and for some reason they landed here in Austin. We don't know why, we don't have any record of that. And why they left, they were linen weavers and of course the industry was beginning to disappear. It was a home kind of industry and the industrial revolution had made factories, as you know. And I assume, we assume that's why they left - not political reasons because there's nothing political there. The one who, the other one who came from down as I said in the Hessen area, he didn't want his sons to serve in the army. He was on the wrong side of the 1848 or what was that 1848? Whenever that little thing was in Germany, you remember he was on the wrong side of that and he lost some land. He was a land owner, middle class, not a prince, nothing, no nobility but he did own some farm land. And he lost some of that at that time and he was not interested in having his sons serve for any prince in the war. So he moved for that reason and he sent the two oldest sons first. They settled with this uncle of theirs that lived here in east Austin and he had property here first and then he was given that grant for serving in the Revolutionary War. So that's why they came here and they settled here for several years and then they bought that land and lived out there. But it was native, even Indians were still roaming that area! I don't know why the Sternbergs came nor the Schroeders. Well, one of the things the Schroeders came for was better opportunity because my great grandfather who lived over in Woerlitz was a gardener. He worked for the prince and if you've ever been to Woerlitz we assume he worked in those gardens. It's beautiful! It's a spa area now.

A: Wow!

J: So it was prince, what was his name? I've forgotten now. I've been there but I've forgotten. Anyway it was for economic improvement.

A: Do you feel an identification with the German experience throughout Texas history?

J: With, oh yes!

A: Is it strong? Do you think it's stronger than or why do you think that it's a strong identification?

J: Well, I think my grandfather Klattenhoff is responsible for that. Later when I was fourteen he had me come one year and go to German school which was held at the church in Pflugerville. And he instructed the preacher, who was the teacher, he instructed him to have me write beans because he wanted me to, in other words, to write German well. I had already been taught before, he had already taught me the old German script which I don't remember anymore. I don't know why. But I would read letters to him from the relatives in Germany. So I already knew something and actually I learned to read German sitting in church with my grandmother and she had one of these Psalm books that doesn't have any music to it. And she would point along the lines and that would keep me quiet because they sang thirteen verses or something. You know what I mean. And the women sat on one side of the church, the men on the other. So I sat with my grandmother.

A: How do you think that being a German-Texan has influenced your view of history?

J: Well, I have a lot of respect for the pioneer spirit because they came and they had to most, uh, all of them were farmers and they had to clear the land and build their houses that were log cabins. To begin with, some of them didn't even have roofs to begin with. They just built, uh, sort of barricade around and, uh, I really have a lot of respect for what they did clearing that land. Then when my grandfather came he came at age 17 - the one that was so close to me - and he started borrowing farmland. They wanted the land - that was a really important thing. He borrowed money from his father Loren and really struggled to acquire that so I have this feeling of great respect for them because a lot of immigrants just huddled in cities and I appreciate what they did and the culture that they preserved and that we could enjoy.

A: How do you think that being a German-Texan has influenced your own experiences?

J: Well, as a result I have loved going back to Germany. I have been there many times but the reason I've had that opportunity is because my daughter is married to an army officer. And she has lived in Germany about 17 years off and on. She married in '68 and so I have loved to go over there. And every time I go we go to different villages because she's lived all over Germany and we walk the streets and enjoy the culture and everything. We go to museums. My son-in-law likes it too. Although he's not German, he loves it and he speaks German. I studied German in the University also.

A: I'm thinking about doing that!

J: Yeah, I took courses in German. I was a Spanish major, would have been a German major but it wasn't very popular in the 30's. So I also knew Spanish, living in South Texas a little. So I selected Spanish for my major and German for my minor. The only bad thing about that was that I knew too much to be placed in the first level but I didn't know the grammar and I had to struggle because German grammar is very complicated. I have taught it one time. I taught first level - I know what happens is students struggle with it. It's just like Latin.

A: It's a little confusing. What did you do in your spare time that was somehow connected with the German culture?

J: I'll have to think about that.

A: Any sports or recreational activities?

J: Well, you see all my growing up years were down in the south county in a little ranching community and there weren't any Germans around. When I came back to visit my cousins we did the things that normal kids do. We played miniature golf and we had parties but we didn't dance. It was not acceptable at that time. Now that sounds crazy but down on the ranch we danced. We went to Saturday night dances but when I came up here to visit my cousins we didn't dance. I was trying to think what kind of activities that I would have been involved in. Oh the main thing was when I came to visit my grandmother she would take me around to visit members of the family. And she had a big extended family since they had been here since '48 , '49, somewhere along in there. It was her ancestors. She wanted me to know members of the family and she would go and we would have Kaffeeklach with all these older people and they told me stories and as a result I'm the genealogist for the family!

A: Right.

J: So I mean that would be the only real activity that I think was related. But we played Dominos, we had Domino parties.

A: But that Kaffeeklach is very German

J: That's not a German cultural thing is it?

A: Sort of more than

J: We played 42. Now I don't where the Dominos came from but it was a very popular activity - we all played. We played that at home, Dominos, everybody in the family did. My mother played the piano and she sang. I had two sisters and we all played the piano when we were growing up.

A: So was music very, music was pretty important in your family?

J: It was really important although I don't sing! That's not one of my, now both of my sisters and my mother could sing but my dad and I were sort of not able to sing very well.

A: What kind of festivals or celebrations did your family take part in?

J: The main thing was birthday parties and I'm sure that's a German tradition. I don't care how young the child was there would be a party and there might be 50 or 60 people who would come to this party. And they had lots of food as you can imagine. The men usually played Dominos and the women looked after the kids or whatever and talked. Now a lot of the talk was in German.

A: Really?

J: Yeah! When they got together they often spoke German and the men did too. All of them, all of my aunts and uncles and their spouses, all spoke German as well as English. So they had all gone to German school. They went to German church services, until the 30's.

A: Were there any festivals in your community that were celebrated?

J: Pardon?

A: Any festivals in your community?

J: Well, in the early years they had the Maifest. My mother was May Queen once! That was in this little community but they had discontinued that. I was trying to think if there was anything typically German in that. There was something in the community where the Germans got together. In other words, a lot of it was through the church. A lot of activities that were related to whatever was in the church. Take Christmas for example, they would have these wonderful programs where every child participated. I didn't live in that community but I always loved to go and hear what my cousins were saying because on my mother's side of the family I had 30 cousins, there were lots of them. But at grandpa's house this was special. He always had a Christmas tree and he didn't go to that service. He was always at home preparing to be Santa Claus but he didn't wear a suit but he would be there with a big grin when we'd come back. And he'd have everything ready and all the gifts were there and they hadn't been there before. He decorated the tree and had the gifts there. That was a typical thing. Another thing that I participated in when my grandparents had their 50th wedding anniversary. Grandpa brought out, he had little bity glasses of wine which he had made himself which was a specialty he never gave anybody the recipe! He always served that to people when they came to his house but he served that to everybody. And at the end they had a shivaree. Do you know what that is?

A: No.

J: His nieces and nephews, well, grandma's nieces and nephews really. They stood on the outside of the house with their pans and spoons and made a lot of noise. So that was typical of a, they call it a shivaree. Now I don't know whether that was German. Shivaree sounds more like it was French but it was something they practiced.

A: What was your favorite activity that you participated in in your childhood?

J: Horseback riding! A: Horseback riding?

J: Well, I like sports, that's German. I played volleyball and tennis and baseball and rode my horse. I went to a little country school and they didn't have enough boys for a team so the girls played on the team. Also we had, it was softball actually at that time. Then my dad had arranged a tennis court and he and I played tennis. And there again we had a mixed team for volleyball. Those were the sports I participated in. Of course I walked a lot through the woods within this

little ranching community. But the horseback riding was really special and I had my own horse and living in a community like that you would.

A: Yeah. What traditions did your family have that were connected

J: What?

A: What traditions did your family have that were connected to the German culture?

J: Well, I think the Christmas tradition was one of the very special ones when we were not my grandparents house. Many times in our home my mother always had the living room door closed and she was the one that had the Christmas tree and everything. And we had the same thing in that little community on Christmas eve. We would go to the school house and we would have the big community Christmas tree and everybody would get a sack of fruit and candy and nuts. Then we would come home and mother would open the door after she would light the candles first because we didn't have electricity. She would light the candles and then we would all go in and have our, just my dad and mother and my two sisters and me, and there would be our gifts under the tree. So it was just our little family. Also I don't know whether this is a German tradition or not. Egg Nog was served and there was very little whisky. There was a little glass at my grandmother's house, I mean not a glass, a pitcher that was always there. There was always the extra whisky for the adults if they wanted it. But it was just seasoned a little bit for the children. So that was very special. I was trying to think, I think the Easter part also because in the night before Easter we would go out into the woods and gather flowers and we would make very fancy Easter nests on the outside. Then when we would get up in the morning there would be the eggs. Some were in the nest and some were hidden. I think that was typically a German thing. And I was trying to think if there was anything else that was typically German. I know the weddings were too but we didn't ever have any weddings down there. I went to some of my cousins' weddings where they had the big feast afterwards. We didn't ever have the three day celebration, I have been to those too. That's a very German custom to celebrate for three days. People would go home and sleep and come back. Isn't that funny? But the bride and groom always left the first day. But they'd get together for three days, but we didn't do that. I went to Texas Lutheran College and that was in 1933. We were right in the midst of the depression and my folks were considering whether I could go to college or not and I did go because we had a co-op college there at that time. Tuition, room and board was \$250 a year, \$125 a semester, and everybody had a job. The guys did the lawns and everything. There was no hired help except one man who kept up things like the plumbing and whatever, you know, handyman kind of things. And there were two cooks in the dining room. So some of us were assigned dining room duty and we got paid ten dollars a month because we had to wash dishes and help the cooks. So that was really, I did that so I could have some spending money. Ten dollars a month, that was a lot in those days. Then I learned to type and I could type things, but Texas Lutheran College, I think, had a lot of German tradition to it.

A: Really?

J: In those days it did. It was mostly Texas Germans who went to school there.

A: What kind of things did you do there that were German?

J: Well, I was trying to think. We had a missionary society which raised money or whatever, we studied missionaries. We were working all over the world and we had speakers that would come in and one of the speakers strangely enough became my sister-in-law! I didn't know that at the time, didn't know she even had a brother but she worked with the Mexican missions. So that was the... They also had a very fine choir which I couldn't participate in but I did play in the band. I played the clarinet in the band. So I was trying to think, what are some of the other traditions that we could have had? Well I'll say one thing that was very typical even on the ranch. There was a few families there - Swedish, and German and Czech - and they had only used English because they couldn't communicate in those languages. And they would have open house on Sunday afternoons with food that was typical of their culture. The Germans would have coffee cakes, the Czechs would have kolaches and the Swedish would have something that was related to the Swedish. And that was very good. We always looked forward to that. When I was about 14 or 15 I would go with this boy and we would go out to visit Mrs. Hatterman and she says "Oh Julia and Jerry, I'm so glad to see you today!". And we would go especially for her good food. We loved to eat and Jerry was Swedish and I was a German background. So it was funny!

A: On the thought of food, how was your diet influenced by your German culture?

J: Well, my mother was a very good cook and my grandmother was too. I think that that was definitely very German, the way they cooked. I think of my grandmother particularly -this was a German-Texan tradition - cornbread every morning for breakfast in the woodstove, summer and winter. She made cornbread and it was wonderful! That was German-Texan but she seasoned particularly lamb or mutton. She would season that in a special way which lamb stew and things like that which was definitely German. And she made German potato salad and we all learned to like these things and we made Sauerkraut. Even my mother always made Sauerkraut. Then we would kill a hog and we would render the lard and we would have the cracklings. Then she would make bread, cornbread, with the cracklings. You know what cracklings are don't you? When you render lard what you have left is what we call crackling and they would put up the lard. And another thing she did which was very typical - I don't know whether that's German or not where she learned that - was they made soap out of the lard when it began to get rancid. Then we had a great big pot out in the backyard to heat water for washing and they used that to make the soap. She didn't do --- My grandmother got her lye from the ashes but mother bought it in a can. And they used lye, in other words. in water and the lard to make soap, wonderful soap! Another thing was bread: we didn't buy bread. When we moved to the ranch area she took her starter with her and if we were going to be gone for a while she would give it to a neighbor and when she'd come back she get the starter from the neighbor. So we always had, and another thing she did was to make cottage cheese every morning. She had a little, well, we called it a flour sack. I guess it was more of a salt sack because it was rather porous. And she would pour that clabber in there. The milk had gotten clabbered during the night. I don't know if you know what that is or not. When it gets sour because we would always skim the cream off and this is just what was left. Then she would tie a little string around it and hang it on the clothesline and let it drip. Then for supper we had cottage cheese. A typical supper was cottage cheese with fried potatoes, sometimes onions with the potatoes.

A: Oh I'm getting hungry

J: But in other words those were some of the things and to this day I still enjoy that food!

A: Alright, Was religion pretty important in your family's homelife?

J: It was very important.

A: How what did y'all

J: We didn't have a church, we never had a church in that little community but we went to Sunday school every Sunday. And at first there were men in the community who took over and later my mother was a Sunday school superintendent and we never missed a Sunday. And nearly every Sunday there would be a circuit rider from one religion or another. Mainly it was Methodist and Lutheran. They would come and give the sermon and we even read the Bible in school on Monday morning. We had what we called chapel and this is public school. We said the allegiance to the flag and then we had the Bible reading and a prayer. Just a regular chapel service that was typical in those days. Religion was very important!

A: And in school?

J: Pardon?

A: In school too?

J: Yeah! Well, we didn't, that was the only part that we had in school and I don't know if that would have been something because there were a lot of people in Germany that were freethinkers. I don't think they were all that interested in religion, were they? Of course they'd had the war where so many of the Protestants and the Catholics had fought so many years.

A: Yeah, it's just dying out there.

J: But all of my ancestors were Protestant.

A: Okay.



JULIA MELLENBRUCH & ANN STUIFBERGEN

THE RURAL SCHOOLS OF GILLESPIE COUNTY**By Ronni Pui**

In March of 1999, a rumor circulated in Gillespie County that the Fredericksburg Independent School District was thinking about selling twelve rural (country) schools located throughout Gillespie County. These twelve had not been used as schools since the 1950s but continued to exist as community centers in rural areas originally settled by German immigrants.

The rumor turned out to be false. But as a result, concerned citizens started a grassroots movement to preserve the twelve schools for future generations. This led to organization of the "Friends of Gillespie County Country Schools," an association interested in preserving the country schools and the traditions of their communities.

The first public school in Gillespie County was the "Vereins Kirche" established at Fredericksburg in 1847 by German immigrants. As German pioneers established homesteads in the surrounding areas, they brought their strong tradition of education with them, and soon the county's rural community schools were built. In addition to being places for education, some of these buildings and properties were community centers and served as polling places, churches, and post offices. These schools were the ideal places for social gatherings such as weddings, club meetings, and family reunions. Probably the most important social activity was the "school closing" held in May of each year, and for which special stages and pavilions were built, some temporary and some permanent.

Rural schools in Gillespie County, as opposed to Fredericksburg, began in the home of a family with the most children of school age. As more children moved into the community, school buildings were erected with volunteer labor and supplies. Wood burning stoves were common. The same wood burning stove which sat in the middle of the classroom at Cave Creek School is still in use. Most of the early schools contained only benches for the pupils and a teacher's desk and chair. Kerosene or gas lanterns provided light. Progress brought student desks, blackboards and perhaps a bookcase. Depending upon the school, the student desks were single, double, or as in the Crabapple School, even built for three pupils. Electricity came to the Texas Hill Country in the 1940s.

As late as the 1950s many students started school in Gillespie County speaking only German. These children had to learn the English language. The official school language was English, as required by law as early as 1854, so all subjects were taught in English and included arithmetic, writing, spelling, history, grammar, and geography. Some schools also taught classes of interest to the principal and students. Willow City School taught Latin, physics and plane geometry at one time. Although classes were taught in English, some students recall receiving a scolding in German !

Students in the 1800s and early 1900s walked or rode horses or donkeys to school. Cherry Spring School had a saddle shed so the children who rode a horse could unsaddle their horse, store their saddle, and leave their horse tied to a tree until school dismissed. Willow City had a roping arena on the school grounds, where horses could roam during school.

Some former students at Rheingold School remember coming to school barefoot, even in the winter months, and sliding barefoot on the ice.

Drinking water for rural schools came from various sources. Many schools had hand-dug wells and pulled up water with a bucket or a hand pump. Most schools built cisterns and used the filtered rainwater for drinking. A few schools got their water from a nearby neighbor, which meant brining it to school in a bucket. Some students carried their water from home due to the fear of epidemic. Indoor plumbing in the 1950s brought water fountains into the school houses as most schools had installed a machine-dug well with water pump.

Outhouses for boys and girls commonly were separated by a great distance. Indoor facilities replaced the old outhouses in later years, although many still are standing on the various school grounds today.

A rural school had three daily breaks from classes: a noon break (each student brought his or her own lunch), and a morning and an afternoon recess. During these breaks children of all ages gathered to play games such as marbles, jump rope, kick the can, dodge ball, red rover, hide-and-seek, volleyball, baseball, basketball, and a variety of spur-of-the-moment games. (Some of their games probably not so well known today were andy-over, stealing sticks and power base.)

Most country school properties included a pavilion often constructed of wood and tin with a cement floor and a raised stage platform. In addition to being a facility for community social gatherings, these pavilions were for "school closing" celebrations held each May. In the afternoon, younger students, under direction of the teachers, presented plays, skits and songs, while older children presented a three-act play in the evening. Some schools held their "Schulprufung" (public school examination) as a prelude to the school closing activities. The day's festivities also included baseball games, band music, games, visiting and reminiscing, and even dances that lasted into the night. Ice cream bars, candy, and cold drinks were sold at stands manned by the fathers of students. Possibly the best part of the whole day was the picnic meal of barbecue prepared over a large open pit, with side dishes brought from home.

Almost all the country schools experienced a decrease in enrollment during the 1950s. By then, many of the country schools had consolidated, and trustees of the remaining schools reluctantly voted to consolidate their schools with the Fredericksburg Independent School District. As a result, throughout Gillespie County country school buildings were left vacant after serving as educational and social centers for their communities for more than fifty years. It was the feeling of loss of community closeness that had been afforded by the schools that prompted the formation of many community clubs. At the present time, ten of the twelve country schools mentioned above are meeting places for community clubs with more than four hundred members. (The clubs at Nebgen School and Wrede School folded in the 1990s.) Today these clubs meet monthly for card and domino games and pinochle. Evening activities include shared meals or refreshments. Special gatherings highlight social activities such as barbecue or "potluck" picnics or fish fries during the

summer or fall and Christmas parties in December. The country schools are sites for family reunions, class reunions, meetings, receptions, and parties celebrating weddings, graduations, confirmations, birthdays, and youth activities such as 4-H Club meetings, and other activities.

The following is a brief sketch of the twelve country schools remaining in Gillespie County, all them at one time with close ties to German-Texan communities.

ALBERT (WILLIAMS CREEK) SCHOOL

In 1891, one acre of land was purchased for one dollar on Williams Creek and a one-room log cabin was built. This site was to close to the creek and in November 1897 and the school was relocated in the community now known as Albert. By 1922, two teachers were needed for the growing number of students and another room was added. President Lyndon B. Johnson attended this school for a short time in 1920-21. Reverend Arhelger tells the following about the Albert School (ca. 1895): "John Merz taught us reading and writing in German and in English. He was a scholar in his own right and a strict disciplinarian. The primary language of instruction was English, even though there were only two families in the community that were exclusively English speaking at the time. Children grew up on the farm in the cotton patch, but tried to have all the cotton picked before school began in September. It was important that the children did not miss school."

CAVE CREEK SCHOOL

John Ebert deeded eight acres for a school in 1865. The school was organized in 1870 and named Cave Creek for the natural caves located in a nearby creek. The one-room schoolhouse was finished in 1881 and the wood stove in the middle of the building is still being used today. School closings in May were well attended and were community affairs and included a children's program and graduation in the afternoon. In the evening there was a BBQ, which was sold by the pound and families brought side dishes. Adults who had attended the school presented a play, which was followed by a dance in the pavilion. The school has been used as a precinct polling place since 1889 and is used by the Cave Creek 4-H club.

CHERRY SPRING SCHOOL

School classes for the children of German immigrants in the Cherry Spring community were held in homes until 1885, when a 31'x 23' schoolhouse was built using locally quarried limestone on land donated by H. Bratherich. On dedication day, students marched in a happy parade from the home where classes had been held to the new building. Despite the Great Depression, Cherry Spring built a large pavilion in 1936. The stage area has movable walls which allowed it to be used as a second classroom. Grades one through five met in the "Little Room", which

could be converted into a stage, while grades six through nine met in the original rock building, or "Big Room." Until the 1950's teachers often boarded with residents of the community. One student rode a donkey to school in the 1920's. Almost every morning at 11:45, punctual as clockwork, the donkey would bray, dismissing everyone for lunch.

CRABAPPLE SCHOOL

Many parents were eager to donate land so a school could be built near their homes. The Crockett Riley and Mathias Schmidt families were extremely anxious to give the land for a school. A footrace won by Mathias Schmidt determined that the school would be built on the land he gave for this purpose. The first building was a two story rock house built in 1878 with two rooms: one was a classroom, and the other living quarters for the teacher. Between 1887 and 1910 this building also served as a post office. The second building was built in 1882 out of limestone rock at a cost of \$600. The second building also served as a Lutheran church until the congregation built its own church building nearby in 1897. School was held here until 1957 when only 9 students remained and the school was consolidated with Fredericksburg.

LOWER SOUTH GRAPE CREEK SCHOOL

The Lower South Grape Creek School had been part of the Luckenbach School until 1871 when the trustees voted to buy one and a third acres on the west banks of South Grape Creek from Juliane Wehmeyer for \$50. A more accessible location for the school was purchased in 1900 from Charles and Martha Ahrens for \$5 along the creek next to the Austin highway. The cut limestone block single room building was completed in 1901 and had a tin roof with a bell tower on the east end and a chimney on the west end. In later years, a small porch with concrete slab and a larger porch were added. This fall there will be a 100th anniversary celebration.

LUCKENBACH SCHOOL

A log schoolhouse was built on two acres of land along Grape Creek purchased from Peter Pehl for \$4 in 1855. Due to an increase in the student enrollment, additions were added in 1881, 1905, and 1949. During the 1860's a one-room stone teacherage was built. The floors were made of 16-inch wide planks hauled from Indianola and the rafters were hand-hewn. Another room was added later to join the teacher's home to the schoolhouse. A new 25'x34' schoolhouse was built of native limestone in 1905. Stones used in this building, some of them measuring 22"x 54" came from the Pehl property. Many of the families who settled in this community paid \$1 a year to attend school and are still represented in the area. An old-fashioned school bell summoned the children to class; boys lined up on the left and girls on the right. Older students helped the younger ones with grammar and math.

MEUSEBACH CREEK SCHOOL

The first Meusebach Creek School was built in the late 1860's on the Fritz Lochte property near Meusebach Creek. It was a 96 square foot log cabin with a shingled roof. A second more spacious school was built of stone in the 1880's. In 1897, the third structure, a frame building, was built on one acre donated by Louis Bonn, this was the first land owned by the school. The fourth and last frame building with nine windows, two entrances, a large classroom, a library and a cloakroom was built the 1930's. Henry, Laura, Minnie, Ovie, and George Washington, whose parents were freed slaves, attended school with the other children at Meusebach in 1869. This was one of the first integrated schools in the South.

NEBGEN SCHOOL

The Nebgen School District was located near the Gillespie-Blanco county boundary. In 1881 the first school was built of logs on land donated by the Truman Taylor family and was called Smith Valley School. One hundred and fifty yards from the first school, a second school was built in 1901 and named Lindemann School since the Lindemann family had the largest number of children enrolled. Several years later it was renamed Nebgen School. Nebgen School was rebuilt in 1936. The one-room frame building had an embossed tin exterior, a tin roof, a stone chimney, one door and many windows. The north interior wall was covered with blackboards. A choir of 12 was organized in 1935, bringing togetherness and enjoyment to the community.

PECAN CREEK SCHOOL

In 1899, the Pecan Creek School was a private school located in the Bernhard Friedrich house that had been bought for \$250. This later became a public school. The house was moved and rebuilt in 1916 on three acres of land donated by school patrons. The original building is all wood with siding added later. In 1936, an open shed, including a stage and dance floor, was attached to the school building. The building was later improved. Double desks purchased in 1935 are still in the classroom, as are a world globe that was purchased in 1936 and a dust-proof map case containing nine maps purchased in 1938 for \$43.62. The stage curtain is still in place with many early-day Gillespie County merchant advertisements.

RHEINGOLD SCHOOL

The first Rheingold School house was a 12 ft. by 14 ft log building, built in 1873 on two acres of land donated by William Gold. A frame and stone teacherage was added later. Eventually a 40 ft. x 22 ft frame building and pavilion were built with materials and labor donated by community families. Up to eight grades were taught, and at one time as many as 74 students were taught by one teacher. One of the teachers had a paddle with the words "Black Medicine" printed on it. "Free school"

was held during the early part of the school term followed by "pay school" during the later part of the school year. The free school period was usually six months or more in length. Pay school would be added to finish the term. Very seldom would a pupil drop out at the end of the free school period.

WILLOW CITY SCHOOL

The Willow City School served English speaking settlers of Scotch Irish descent from the Old South, with a few German settlers that made up of the backbone of the community. The first school was a one-room log cabin with split log benches and no floor. It also served as a church. A two-story frame schoolhouse was constructed in 1890 on higher ground after severe flooding. A bell tower summoned the students to class. J.W. Lindemann and J. C. Hardin donated land in 1905 and after a bond issue, a new two story school was built of native stone. It had two classrooms on the first floor and one room on the second that served as an auditorium with a stage as well as another classroom when there were three teachers. In addition to the more substantial settlers of Willow City, riffraff used the town as a "hangout" in the early 1900's. A knife fight between youngsters in school was a common offense, and there was a report of teachers wrangling with a school boy to take a six-shooter away from him.

WREDE SCHOOL

Friedrich von Wrede owned the land on which the wood school building was built in 1896. Lumber was hauled from Comfort, Texas, by wagon and by October 15, 1896, school had started. A hand dug well supplied water for the school. Mr Ernst Schmidt was the first teacher in 1909 to live in the new teacherage and built flower beds out of rocks in the shape of a five pointed star. The school children would then plant flowers in these flower beds. During 64 years Wrede had 24 teachers and was a two-teacher school from 1949 until 1959. During this time the enrollment reached approximately 53 students. The salary for a teacher in 1896 was about \$28 per month. The school was also used as a community center where people could gather for parties and dances. The 4-H club and the Homemaker Extension Club met there and in later years elections were also held at the schoolhouse. By 1959 a teacher received \$288 per month.

☺ **THE TWELVE COUNTRY SCHOOLS IN GILLESPIE COUNTY
WILL HOLD OPEN HOUSE ON SEPTEMBER 29, 2001 AND
EVERYONE IS INVITED ☺**

PRESERVING OUR GERMAN-TEXAN HILL COUNTRY HERITAGE**By Ronni Pui**

The Gilmer-Aiken Law of 1947 required school consolidation in the rural areas of Texas if there were not a sufficient number of students. During this time, many schools reverted back to the original owners and since have been sold as private homes, some are used as barns, while others are neglected or have been torn down. The twelve country schools remaining in Gillespie County, however, were transferred to the Fredericksburg Independent School District because there was no reverter clause in the deeds. Since the 1950s and 1960s these properties have been leased to community clubs, who have had the full responsibility to maintain them, and no public funds have been used in their upkeep.

Members of the "Friends of Gillespie County Country Schools" started the grassroots movement to preserve the twelve rural schools in Gillespie County as community centers. We know that many rural schools throughout the State of Texas were affected by the Gilmer-Aiken law but now can benefit from Senate Bill 116 and SJR 2, which will allow school districts to donate surplus property for historic preservation to a governmental or non-profit agency. But before this can take effect the voters of Texas will have to approve a constitutional amendment (Proposition 13) in a state-wide vote on November 6, 2001.

Four of the remaining twelve country schools in Gillespie County have obtained Texas State Historical Markers. The Luckenbach School obtained a historical marker in 1982, the Cherry Spring School on May 11, 1990, the Crabapple School in September of 1994, and the Lower South Grape Creek School on October 2, 1994. All the remaining schools are striving to uphold the traditions of their German-Texan ancestors by maintaining the school properties as community centers not only for their use, but for the use of future generations.

At present time, ten of the schools are meeting places for community clubs whose members total more than 400. (Two clubs, those at Wrede and Nebgen, folded in the 1990s.) Organized for social reasons by neighbors in each community, these clubs today meet regularly for card and domino games, usually "42" and pinochle. Evening activities include shared meals or refreshments. Special gatherings highlight social activities such as barbecue or "potluck" picnics or fish fries during the summer or fall and Christmas parties in December. The country schools are sites for family or class reunions, meetings, receptions, and parties celebrating weddings, graduations, confirmations, birthdays and youth activities such as 4-H Club meetings. Several former schoolhouses have become the location for precinct voters to cast ballots in elections. All are available for rental by other groups and are a favorite place for bicycle clubs and walking clubs from San Antonio and Austin.

Since March 1999, "Friends of Gillespie County Country Schools" and the Fredericksburg Independent School District have worked together toward obtaining a permanent solution to the ownership of the twelve remaining country schools. Many individuals have worked together to formulate a plan to achieve a permanent solution, which means ownership for preservation purposes, since the leases would not constitute a

permanent solution in that a newly-elected school board may not be bound by the terms of the lease.

The dilemma is that the Fredericksburg Independent School District is willing to return the country schools to the community clubs at no cost, but by law is unable to do so. The current law requires that a school district can sell surplus property to a government agency at appraised value or to private individuals at market value. None of the community clubs could afford these prices. Moreover, since a bidding process must be involved in the sale, there is no assurance that a club could outbid other buyers.

The only feasible solution to this dilemma was to amend the law (the Education Code) to allow a school district to donate school property to a government agency or to a non-profit organization for historical preservation. To accomplish this solution, the Superintendent of the Fredericksburg Independent School District, with the school board's approval, sent a letter to State Senator Jeff Wentworth and to State Representative Harvey Hilderbran requesting that a bill be introduced in the Legislature in January 2001. That was done, and the bill, Senate Bill 116 calling for an amendment, and the accompanying resolution SJR 2. were approved by the Legislature and signed by the Governor on May 18, 2001. Now, however, to make the needed changes Texas voters must endorse a constitutional amendment in November 2001.

This grassroots movement to preserve our German-Texan Hill Country Heritage has been successful so far, but still has a way to go. We are not done. First, we have to make sure the constitutional amendment is approved in November by the voters of Texas, and then that a permanent preservation organization is established. This preservation effort is a one time opportunity for us because future school boards may not approve the present "donation" of school properties to the community clubs as future school boards have to decide how to pay increasing public school expenses. The Fredericksburg School Board has been very supportive and understands the heritage and German-Texan traditions and is committed to preservation. But this may not be true of future school boards as our population in the German-Texan Hill Country changes.

Members of the "Friends of Gillespie County Country Schools" and The Fredericksburg Independent School District have received significant support from State Senator Wentworth and State Representative Hildebran, the Texas Historical Commission, local historical societies, both Gillespie County and the City of Fredericksburg, the Fair Association, Fredericksburg's newspaper and many of its local businesses and individuals who are committed to preserving our German-Texan heritage. The bottom line is that local preservation efforts can succeed. They are a lot of work, but isn't preserving our heritage worth it?

For more information about this preservation effort contact Friends of Gillespie County Country Schools at 1-803-997-8655 or write to P.O. Box 413, Fredericksburg, TX 78624, or go to their website at www.savetexasruralschools.org

This article appeared in the June/July 2001 edition of German Life
Submitted by Frances Heimer Copeland

German Chili Powder

chili power finds its way into american homes thanks to a dash of german ingenuity **BY RICHARD VARR**

The spiced, pungent smell of sizzling fajitas delightfully crosses my path as I maneuver through the typical Friday night zigzag of revelers in San Antonio. A Mariachi trumpet pierces the combustion of excitement on the famous River Walk here; the musicians serenade those chomping on tasty Mexican food plates. Every table here overflows with chips and salsa — almost like bountiful cartons of popcorn in a movie theater.

I walk by restaurant after restaurant, occasionally glancing down at the steaming plates of enchiladas and tamales; tacos and chalupas; burritos and fajitas. I can almost taste the hot, delicious zing of the chili rellenos or the chili-con-carne. I imagine crunching on chips dipped in spicy chili-con-queso. Yes, all my Mexican food favorites in a city with a distinct Mexican heritage and flavor. Many of them made with chili — in fact, what would Mexican food be without that hot seasoning?

However, before you say "pass the chili," what might fire-up your curiosity is the fact that the man who developed the first commercial chili powder — thus making it readily available in the American kitchen — was not of Mexican heritage, but a German-Texan. His name was William Gebhardt, and you may have noticed that bottles of chili powder and other Mexican food products still carry the Gebhardt name. In fact, for more than 100 years, the ingenuity of a German settler has

helped spark the proliferation of spicy Mexican food across states lines and even around the world.

"It was a German man working out of a restaurant behind a saloon in German New Braunfels, Texas, that started cooking chili and found, according to the popular version, that people liked it and they accepted it." Theresa Gold, a 7th

he found a way to produce enough to sell throughout the year. "He imported ancho peppers from Mexico and started grinding them," says Gold, a local historian and former genealogy editor for the German-Texan Heritage Society. "When he canned them, that made them available year round."

"Mr. Gebhardt's chili cooking or recipes were very popular, and he wanted to expand on that so that everyone could make chili at home anytime they wanted," she adds. "It's quite evident that other restaurants and housewives could purchase this chili powder in these airtight containers, and that really expanded and popularized chili as a dish."

Gebhardt started making his commercial chili powder in 1894. Two years later, he opened his own chili powder factory near downtown San Antonio. According to published articles and printed passages about Gebhardt and his factory, he initially sold about five cases of chili powder from a wagon every week. When his business grew, he patented 37 machines and eventually produced the first canned chili-con-carne and tamales 15 or more years later.

"The quaintness or exoticness of the chili vendors in San Antonio was already becoming a fledgling tourist attraction," Gold explains, referring to a trend beginning in the 1890s. "Writers would write about San Antonio and say 'you can go and stay at these fine



Photo by Richard Varr

Gephardt chili powder and chilis.

generation German Texan, explains the story of how William Gebhardt skillfully wielded a small home meat grinder and a special blend of spices to come up with his famous chili powder.

Because the chili pods were seasonal,

hotels, but make sure you get a hack and drive over to market place in the Westside of the town and partake of this chili, this exotic food.”

She also points out that before Gebhardt's cans made their way into San Antonio kitchens, preparing chili dishes may have taken the joy out of cooking. “Up until this time, going from a chili pod to chili-con-carne involved taking that dried chili pod and grinding it in a hand mill, rock-on-rock. It was very labor intensive, so the cans were, you might say, almost like buying instant chili powder.”

plement juicy bratwurst and steaming sauerkraut.

If you look closely enough, you will see bits of Texas' German roots intertwined with this city's history. For example, right next door to the sacred and revered grounds of the Alamo stands the Menger Hotel, founded by a German Texan who needed a hotel to house his brewery customers overnight.

Just a mile or so south of downtown are stately Victorian homes of the King William Historic District — built mostly by German settlers in the mid to late 1800s. According to Gold, the Germans

A 1911 publication mentions the Gebhardt Chili Powder Company having the downtown San Antonio factory and one in San Luis Potosi, Mexico. The blurb, in *Picturesque San Antonio*, also points out the company expanded into a separate 2,700-square foot factory to produce Gebhardt's Eagle Chili-Con-Carne and Gebhardt's Eagle Tamales.

Today, the factories are no more — a California food company eventually bought the business, and the factories were torn down more than 30 years ago.

Nonetheless, I am curious to find any clue of Gephardt's small business empire



The man in the center of this group of diners is the founder of Gebhardt Mexican Food Company.

I take leave from my River Walk adventure, and climb the stairs up to Commerce Street. I glance away from the packed tourist boats and table umbrella-dotted River Walk and find one of this city's German treasures. It is called Schilo's Delicatessen, and on this Friday evening, an accordion-playing musician belts out a few German folk tunes to com-

who settled in this area were merchants and builders; bankers and business owners. Their communities were clannish; they kept to themselves and spoke their own language. However, at the same time, many settlers became community leaders, politicians, educators and, in William Gebhardt's case, entrepreneurs and inventors.

in San Antonio. I hop on a downtown loop bus and make my way over to S. Frio and Commerce Streets, to where the main factory once stood. In this mostly light industrial area, I see no plant — not even a trace of the famous tradition, but I do find memories of it.

At one corner of the intersection stands a True Value hardware store, and

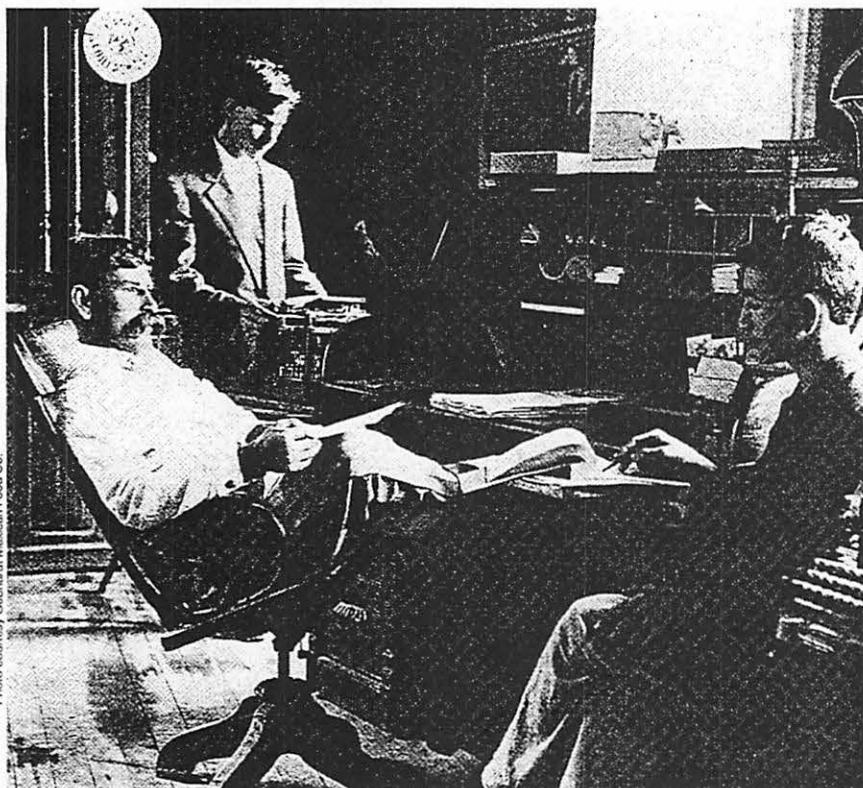


Photo courtesy Gebhardt Mexican Food Co.

with a stroke of luck, I learn it has been a family-owned business for three generations. The owner and his son say, yes, they remember the plant. The owner's father recalls the plant as a bustling business.

"It was a very popular manufacturing factory," says Arnold Estrada. "It was very popular, and everybody knows where Gebhardt's used to be." Estrada also recalls how employees there would buy parts and materials used in the factory,

and that he knew the foreman. "I liked the company and how it was operated," he says. "A lot of our Mexican-American workers used to work there."

Estrada's son leads me out through the back door to where the factory once stood. Across a parking lot, I see a Mexican restaurant surrounded by sparsely planted palm trees. There is no hint of Gebhardt's legacy.

However, a hint of what once happened there is evident in a company cookbook, titled *Mexican Cookery For American Homes*. Copyrighted in 1923, this pamphlet-sized cookbook boasts of the company's "experienced Mexican chefs" and its clean kitchens under the watchful eye of United States government inspectors. One passage describes its Eagle Chili Powder as made from "genuine Mexican chili ancho peppers...blended with... the purest and most select of the spices used in every Mexican household..."

Another passage points out how difficult it was for Americans to get their hands on the proper ingredients for Mexican-style cooking — until William Gebhardt came along. "It was only when Gebhardt succeeded in preparing and blending these spices into piquant perfection of Eagle Chili Powder that Mexican dishes really became practical so far as American homes were concerned," the passage reads. "Since introduction of this fine condiment combination, the growing popularity of Mexican Cookery in American homes has been truly remarkable. The Mexican chili flavor — original of all American condiments — has taken its rightful place."

So is it with a dash of irony that a German settler could be the father of promoting Mexican-style cooking in America? "That probably indicates some of the inventiveness of the German people transplanted here to Texas," points out Gold. "Sometimes I think it takes someone coming into an area from the outside to look at things with a different eye, to be able to see what's right under your nose." **GL**

Richard Varr has previously been a television reporter for fifteen years, a newspaper reporter for three years, and is now a freelance writer living in Radnor, Pennsylvania.

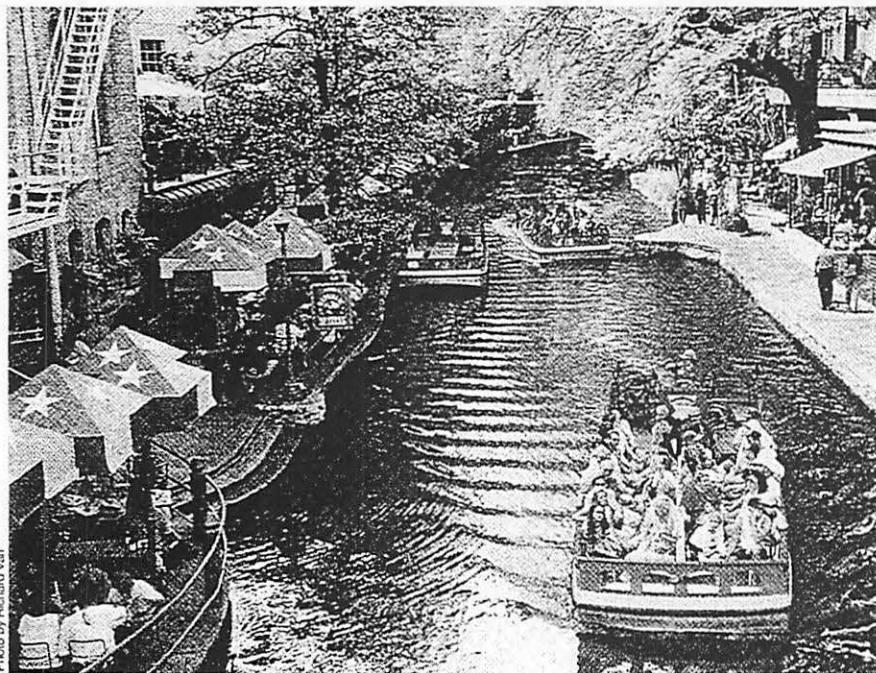


Photo by Richard Varr

Top: William Gebhardt seated at his rolltop desk with two unidentified office workers on either side of him. Above: The San Antonio Riverwalk.

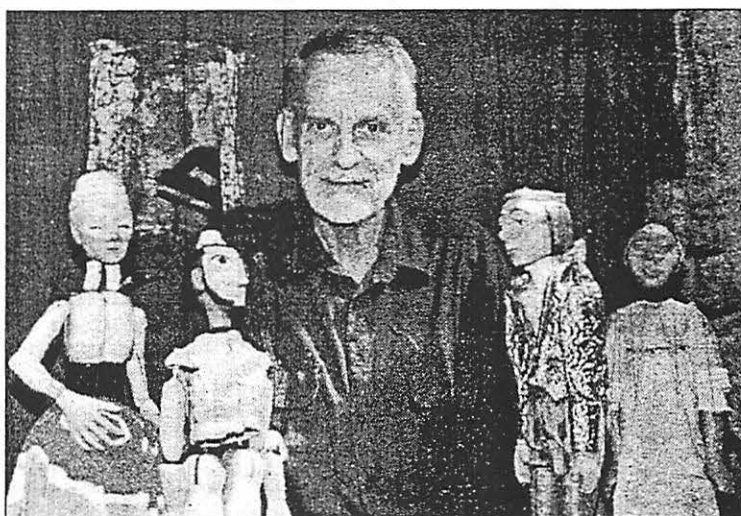
This article appeared in the West Austin News, May 24, 2001
Submitted by Charles Kalteyer

Annual MaiFest celebrates German heritage

by Robert Godwin

A beautiful afternoon served as the background for the annual MaiFest Celebration hosted by the German Heritage Society. Event chair Wing Evans and committee pulled all the pieces together for an outstanding day of music, food, beer and Maipole wrapping. Contributing to the fun was the Austin Accordion Association as represented by Shirley Johnson, Jack Stankus and J.W. Claus. Additional music was supplied by the Sangerrunde Mannerchor, Damenchor and Kinderchor, the Westwood High School German Class with Maipole wrapping by the

Bowie High School German Class. Don Harms thrilled all with his marionette presentation of Cinderella.



Don Harms with his marionettes charmed both children and adults



Julia Germany (Executive Director-German Heritage Society) with Wing and Barbara Evans (MaiFest 2001 Chair)

This article appeared in the Wichita Falls Record News, April 2, 1948
Submitted by Phillip Vogel and Evelyn Vogel

Meet Col. Specht-- The 'Baron Of Clara'

By W. L. UNDERWOOD
Record News Staff Writer

When Wichita Falls established its own junior college in 1922, it was the first of its kind in Texas, but it still was all of 22 years behind the first college planned and announced for opening in Wichita County.

True, the earlier venture failed to materialize, for reasons which now defy discovery. But the fact that Iowa Park College was scheduled to open Oct. 1, 1890, "only four blocks from the railway depot in Iowa Park," points the fact that an amazing spirit of advanced culture existed there through the presence of one of the most notable families to be found in Wichita County history.

That was the family headed by Col. Herman Specht, and which included Mrs. Clara Vogel Specht and her two sisters, the Misses Rosa and Josephine Specht Vogel.

College Abandoned

Announcement of the impending opening of the college at Iowa Park, included in a map of the Texas Addition to that city issued in 1889, makes interesting reading for present day Wichitans. It stresses the location of Iowa Park "in the center of Wichita County" on the Fort Worth & Denver City Railroad. Surrounded by "the richest and most fertile" land in Northwest Texas, "embracing the famous Red River and Wichita Valleys," Iowa Park "dominated an area unsurpassed in productiveness for wheat, oats, barley, corn, fruit and vegetables."

For modern Wichita County residents, the absence of any reference to oil is a conspicuous evidence of the comparative antiquity of that map.

Leading citizens of Iowa Park were trustees of the new institution, and were to have the help of "an experienced Fort Worth educator" in establishing "one of the best educational institutions in Northwest Texas." Col. Specht was joined by Capt. S. B. Burnett and Theo Vogel, both of Fort Worth, in launching plans for the college, according to Oscar

Vogel, now vice president of the Continental National Bank of Fort Worth, and a son of Theo Vogel. The Fort Worth banker, like early settlers in the Iowa Park area, is without information as to why proposed establishment of the college was abandoned.

But though the college failed to materialize, Colonel Specht impressed himself deeply upon the community of which Iowa Park then was the capital. It is surprising today how vividly and extensively his more than 15 years' life in that part of Wichita County is recalled by surviving pioneers who knew him. In somewhat lesser degree, but quite as memorably, his wife and her two sisters personified a type of living which is strangely anomalous against the background of the 1890 cow country.

20,000 Acre Colony

In an economic sense, Colonel Specht and Clara Vogel Specht wrote themselves indelibly into Wichita County history by colonizing a tract of nearly 20,000 acres of land north of Iowa Park by early development of fine Hereford herds; and by assisting in the building of Iowa Park.

Largely through Specht influence, German families from Missouri, Minnesota and elsewhere settled near Iowa Park and Clara to provide this country with some of its most thrifty, stable and capable families.

But the memory of the Specht household, the Specht scheme of living, is far more vivid and lasting than could have been aroused merely by colonizing farm lands and raising good beef cattle in an open range country. That memory stems from contact with personalities in which charm combined with capacity, style with stability, and dignity with democracy. Specht and his wife were a rare combination of European culture with American enterprise.

Prominent on an elevation northwest of the townsite of Iowa Park, the elegant home built by Colonel and Mrs. Specht in 1890 was the pride of that community and the recurrent retreat of distinguished visitors from all parts

of the nation. The house itself was conspicuous in capacity, design and materials. It is said to have cost \$4,800, which sum at that time provided almost a baronial mansion befitting the physical appearance and personal bearing of its owner.

The Specht larder was ample, and was enriched constantly by stores of rare imported foods. The wine cellar was large and stocked to the taste of a connoisseur. Furnishings were luxurious, reflecting the cultivated tastes of the occupants. Distinguished visitors were many, and they were entertained lavishly. Yet Col. Herman Specht, Clara Vogel Specht and the two Misses Vogel are recalled with remarkable unanimity as kindly, neighborly, generous and genuinely democratic.

House Still Stands

The house is still sturdy and prominent on the hill a few blocks north of the mansion built by the late Tom Burnett in Iowa Park about 25 years ago. It no longer has the ornate white picket fence which surrounded it 50 years ago. The spacious back porch, enclosed with lattice-work and extending over two huge cisterns, is gone. Flower beds and shrubs which made the south lawn an impressive garden a half-century ago have not survived. But the house stands to declare the excellent materials and workmanship with which it was raised.

Its hardwood floors are smooth and firm, as is the woodwork. While "Venetian Blinds" are regarded as a modern fixture, it is notable that the fast windows of the Specht dining room were equipped with such blinds—four narrow vertical sections to each window.

Open grates in both the dining and living rooms are faced in decorative imported tile. Each is surmounted by a large mirror of finest quality. Ironically, some

years ago, an oil lamp on the mantle in the living room imparted too much heat, and the mirror was cracked. Walls are in smooth white plaster, very well-preserved.

In the living room, near the front door, is an upright piano. In that same place the Spechts had a piano, for Miss Josephine Vogel was an accomplished pianist. There, as Miss Mina Troutman of Iowa Park recalled with a glowing smile, children whom the Spechts entertained on Christmas eve each year had thrilling sessions singing Christmas carols. Miss Troutman recalled little else about the Specht home, but her memories of those Christmas eve parties are vivid. The hosts were jolly, kind and generous, she said.

Along with the lofty ceilings of those days, the house contains also the customary large hall on

the ground floor as well as upstairs. Besides the living room, dining room and huge kitchen downstairs, there are the hall and two large bedrooms. Aloft are three more large bedrooms, opening off a central hall as large as many modern living rooms. At the north end of that hall is a smaller room which speaks eloquently of the colonel's care to provide his family with all possible comforts. Shelf-marks around the walls mark this as the linen room. The oaken paneling of the walls apparently has suffered not at all in nearly 60 years of use.

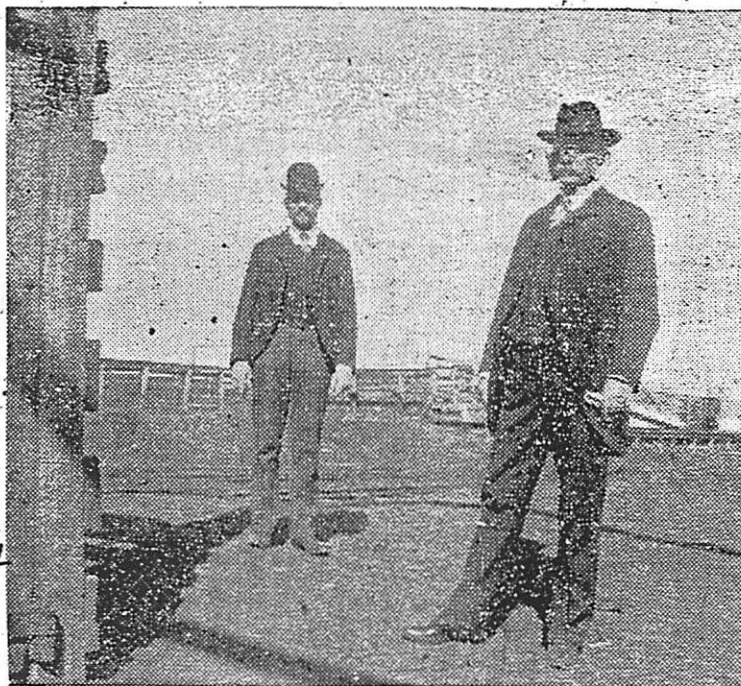
Plenty of Water

In the ceiling of the linen room is a large trap door, providing access to the attic. Therein you probably would find a surprise. It is a huge all-copper reservoir,

more than six feet long, four wide and three deep. This was the "supply" for bath and kitchen water supply. Close against the north wall, it was connected with the two cisterns just outside that wall beneath the enclosed back porch, as surviving pipes indicate. Each of those brick-necked concrete cisterns is 14 feet wide, and 20 feet deep. If it ever rained, the Spechts had soft water.

But who were the Spechts? And why was it "Colonel" Specht? So nearly as can be learned, the title was entirely honorary, and was merely the result of natural response to the dignity and amplitude of his personality.

It would have been easy to believe that Herman Specht formerly had been a German army officer, for he was tall, erect, poised—the picture of a Prussian gentleman of the Bismarckian era. He is remembered in Iowa Park as well-groomed, well-dressed, always with a boutonniere on the lapel of his black Prince Albert



STATELY 'BARON'—Why Herman A. Specht was known as "Colonel Specht" may be discerned in part from the above picture, taken about 1895. In the background is a man named on the back of the photograph in the colonel's handwriting as "my friend, Sol Mayer." They had just shipped some cattle to College Station, the inscription said. It was addressed, to Mrs. Specht, and was signed "your best half."

coat. For many years he wore a full mustache with upturned points, and often carried a cane.

John Hirschi, however, probably has the most sufficient answer as to whether Colonel Specht had done military service.

"Colonel Specht and I were on jury service once together, for a Judge Miller, here in Wichita Falls," Hirschi said. "During a re-

cess, we all were talking together, and Judge Miller asked him about the title. Specht said no, he never had been in the army over there, but instead, had come to the United States in part for the purpose of escaping German army service, as many others did. He said the title of Colonel had just 'grown up' among his companions in this country."

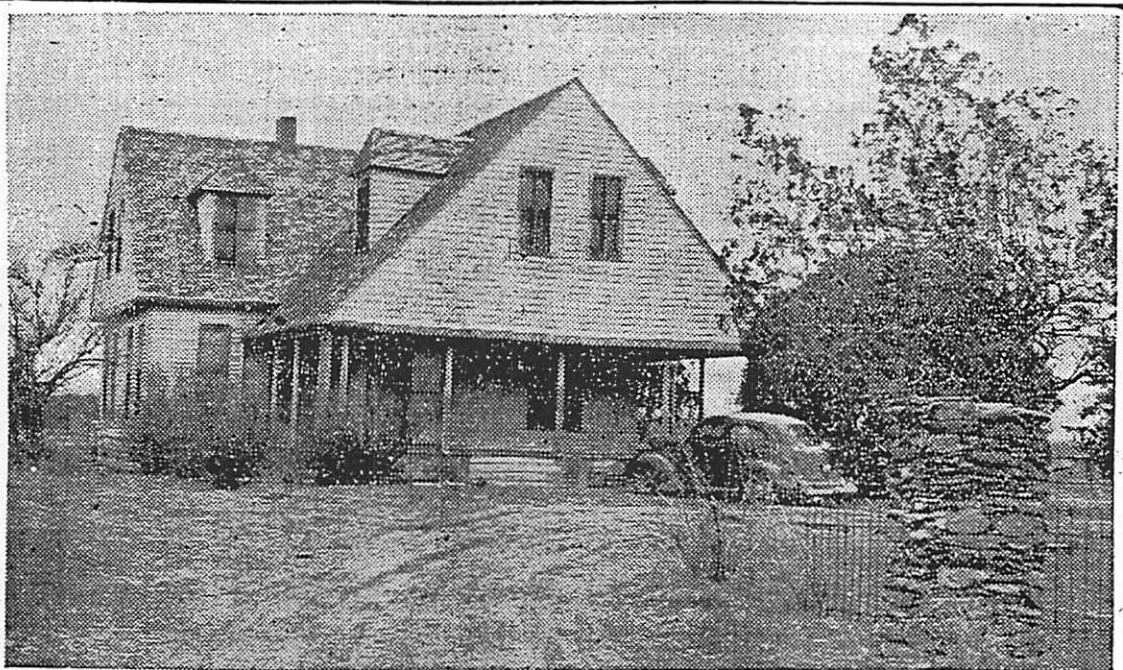
Arrived in Galveston

Specht, it appears, had been raised on one of the large estates, in the northwestern part of Germany, owned by Count Otto von Bismarck, the "Iron Chancellor" who brought about the consolidation of the German empire and who crushed France in the brief war of 1870. Herman Specht apparently came more or less directly to Galveston shortly after that Franco-Prussian war, for by 1875 he was active there as an accountant for one or more cotton companies.

There was also in Galveston at that time a hardware and cotton dealer named Lange, a man of considerable means but of frail health. Lange's wife was the former Miss Clara Vogel. She was the daughter of Philip Vogel, who, like his wife, was a native of Louisiana. Mrs. Philip Vogel, however, had been educated at Strasbourg, and spoke both French and German fluently. Aside from Clara, they had three other children, Rosa, Josephine, and Theo, all born at Richmond, Texas. Theo was the father of Oscar Vogel, now with the Fort Worth bank; Jules Vogel of Durango, Colo., who worked with the federal shelterbelt project in Wichita Falls during the late '30s; and Miss Cornelia Vogel of Fort Worth.

To Lange and Clara Vogel at Galveston was born one child, a son who expired in New York at the age of 5 from ptomaine poisoning. Clara inherited heavily when Lange shortly thereafter succumbed to tuberculosis, and she took over management of the estate Lange left her.

In 1884 or 1885, probably the earlier year, Clara Vogel Lange was married to Herman Specht. John Heins of Clara, who worked often as a carpenter for Specht, quoted Colonel Specht as saying: "The day Clara and I were married, she presented me with a wedding gift of \$100,000."



SPECHT MANSION—The old Specht mansion, owned these past nine years by J. D. Padgett, showing the south elevation as it overlooks the city of Iowa Park. Just beyond the tree at the left was the barn in which family vehicles and teams were housed. Mrs. Specht drove a large black horse in a single rig, while the colonel usually drove "a bay and gray" team in his constant travel over that part of the county.

Apparently both Specht and his bride of that period already were familiar with Wichita County, and were interested in its prospects. And although the former Mrs. Lange appears to have had material resources greatly in excess of Specht's, he had become well-known in Galveston, and had definite ambitions in a business way. Certain it is that in 1885, the Spechts began acquiring land in this county. Records of Wichita County show that from 1885 to

1911, more than 60 tracts totaling nearly 18,000 acres of land in the area north of Iowa Park were conveyed to Herman Specht.

Named For Clara

Plans took more definite shape, and indicated at least one earlier visit to this county, when in April, 1886, at Galveston, Specht filed a plat of the Clara townsite which he soon was to file in Wichita County also. The plat was filed here April 24, 1886, with W. E. Brothers, county clerk. Aside from revealing Colonel Specht's firm intent to develop a city at the site since known as Clara, it discloses also his devotion to his bride and to the heroes of their state. The new town was named for Mrs. Specht. North and south streets include such names as Jones, Lamar, Travis, Houston and Burnet. Those running east and west include Crockett, Coke, Roberts, Austin (main street), Reagan, Hubbard and Bowie.

The Spechts obviously were familiar with early Texas history.

Having acquired their first land, and having mapped a townsite in the heart of that tract, the Spechts lost little time in coming to their

"new country." The Denver railroad was building northward to meet the southward-reaching segment up there in the Panhandle, and Iowa Park was bustling. The Tom Corridon's had come back from farming in Ellis County to resume "railroading," and had a sizable boarding house going in Iowa Park. (To them, in 1889, was born Tom Corridon Jr., first white child born in the town).

To the Corridon boarding house Colonel Specht brought his bride, and there they resided until a three-room boxcar-type house could be completed for them on the Specht lands.

That little dwelling was located a short distance northeast of the Gulf tank near the present intersection of Highway 240 with the Clara road. It was in the corner of a ranch of some 3,000 acres extending northward to Red River, and known as the colonel's "home place."

By that time development of "Specht's Colony" was under way. Letters were sent to newspapers, many of them printed in German, in Missouri and Minnesota, inviting farmers to migrate to Wichita County. These appeals were ad-

ressed largely to "colonies" of German families. In those earliest developments, Col. Ashby James of Wichita Falls, an independent banker, was associated with Colonel Specht.

Hiesermans Arrive

Among the earliest arrivals was Gottlieb Hieserman, who arrived in 1886. He had modified his German name of Hausermann to the above spelling after reaching America. He bought 160 acres. Hieserman became a close friend and companion of Specht.

Fred Thom, 1612 Eleventh, according to Snow, did most of Specht's building of barns, houses, etc. Thom himself said Specht's solicitation of settlers appeared in a German-print paper in Minnesota. He came from that state, where Swedes and Norwegians predominate. Thom's speech today has a distinctive Swedish flavor as a result of the many years spent there before coming to Texas more than 50 years ago.

On the "home place," according to Walter Snow, Colonel Specht farmed more expansively than profitably. "Too much overhead," Snow said, was the result of the popular Specht's big-scale operations. Once, coming back from the cattle market at Fort Worth, Snow said, Colonel Specht brought along an "expert" who, at \$100 per month, was to take care of the cattle.

"It didn't take long to see that fellow wasn't worth 25 cents a month," Snow said. "He actually didn't even recognize a sick cow. You had to meet special problems out there. Cows, out there on that dry grass, getting a stomach full

of it and no water, they'd get so mean they'd fight you like a dog."

'Big House' Built

Meanwhile, the "big house" near Iowa Park was built, and there Colonel and Mrs. Specht, with Misses Rosa and Josephine, established residence. Colonel Specht remained active in colonizing the Clara area, and Wiley L. Robertson, a new employe of the City National Bank of Wichita Falls at that time, recalls that the first really long-distance telephone

call he ever had was from Colonel Specht in St. Louis.

Colonel Specht's popularity in Iowa Park in those Benjamin Harrison-Grover Cleveland - William McKinley days is attested remarkably by the reminiscences which flow from old-timers there at the mention of his name.

While Colonel Specht was cultured, widely-traveled and well-read, one is not to suppose that he spent his time reading classics in the home library. They all relate his love for hunting. A. J. (Heavy) Hester, former cowboy and meat market operator, relates that Specht spent most of his days in his buggy, driving over the prairie to the farms or in search of game.

"One morning we were going hunting for antelope," Hester said. "We met the colonel, who had two of the new men from Iowa with him. 'Well,' he sang out, 'we'll see who'll get the goats today!' I got two antelope, near the old Tom Burnett ranchhouse site. We met again coming in that afternoon, and the colonel had gotten nothing. But he usually got them. He was a good shot. That day, he probably let them new fellers from Iowa do the shooting, and the antelope was something new to them.

Charles Van Horn, who came to Iowa Park from Iowa in 1891, recalled the industry and care with which Colonel Specht planted and attended trees and shrubs. Year after year, he said, Specht hauled ice and planted it at the roots of peach trees to prevent premature blooming.

"One of the colonel's closest friends," Van Horn said, "was T. P. Roberts, who had left Austria after the war of 1866 with Germany. Roberts lived near the river, east of Specht's farm. They hunted together a great deal. Specht always had several of the finest possible bird dogs."

Van Horn and Mrs. Blanche Hall, Iowa Park, both recalled that whenever there was enough snow on the ground to support a sled runner, the wheels came off the Specht buggy promptly to be replaced with runners. Then, hooking up "a bay and a gray," they said, he was off across the prairies for as long as the snow lasted, sleighbells ringing, as he made the most of winter.

Mrs. Hall observed also that when she and her sister were employed as waitresses at the old St. James Hotel in Wichita Falls, they often saw the Specht family there. Their presence made it a "special occasion," Mrs. Hall said.

Heins, along with Van Horn, Hirschi and others remembered Colonel Specht's ardor for hunting, and his skill. Along the edge of Red River, in sandy land, hunting geese or ducks, Specht "would cut his galloping horses into a turn so sharp the entire rig would be hidden in the swirl of sand—the colonel all the time upright in the rig, with his gun ready."

He hunted antelope the same way on the prairie, they said. His horses seemingly were trained, according to John Hirschi, to run the game into shooting position as a cow pony would cut out designated steers. Sometimes, for such hunting, the colonel had a companion who drove the team while he, erect with Winchester rifle, did the shooting. On all his drives, he "always had his gun along," was common testimony.

According to Heins, Colonel Specht declared that his family back in Germany considered him their "black sheep," due in part to his independence of spirit and his lack of appetite for military training and service. It was with their hearty approval, therefore, that he had

departed his native land for the United States.

Their interest in Europe heightened by correspondence with Colonel Specht's brother, Emil, in Germany, the Misses Rosa and Josephine went abroad somewhere about the turn of the century. Becoming interested in the study of art, they remained in Europe some five years. Miss Rosa engaged in painting, Miss Josephine in the study of piano.

John Hirschi, who reached this county about the same time the Spechts came, recalled the outstanding refinement of the family.

"Mrs. Specht probably was slightly older than the colonel, her two sisters somewhat younger," Hirschi said. "Mrs. Specht was quite stout, but of notable dignity and grace. She spoke perfect English. The two sisters also were well-educated and refined in manner.

"But they were amiable and democratic. I recall an occasion on which, while driving to Wichita Falls, Mrs. Specht had a runaway, and they were left stranded. She and the two sisters came to our house and asked if we could take them back to Iowa Park. We had only a lumber wagon, but they welcomed that kind of rig. We placed boards across the box for seats, and I drove them to Iowa Park. They seemed as much at home as if it had been a surrey."

But some 15 years after development of the "Specht colony" began, it became apparent that adversity itself is no respecter of persons. The first serious blow upon the Specht fortunes occurred when the historic flood of 1900 was hurled upon Galveston. Much of the property which they owned there was destroyed as their buildings were swept into the gulf. Their income from those properties had been large.

Gradually the lands were sold out, with the assistance of Theo. Vogel, Mrs. Specht and others. On land which the colonel had given, a German Lutheran church was established and a strong public school was developed.

Why did the town of Clara not grow? Pioneers who have known this county for 70 years advance the probably basic reasons.

First, there was no water. Intensive search failed to uncover in the Clara area the water resources which abound near the river. Settlers along Gilbert Creek, further east, had better luck; and eventually "Nestorville" became a recognized community, and later (1907) became the town of Burkburnett.

Colonel Specht came to the United States primarily to escape German militarism. Almost 50 years later, he was to return to Germany, find himself imprisoned by a resurgence of German militarism, and to die there under its shadow.

Dies in Germany
The brother, Emil Specht, long had urged Herman Specht to return to the homeland for his health's sake. The baths available there, Emil had contended, would hasten a return to good health. Finally, in 1913, Herman yielded, and went to Germany. A year later, at the pleading of both Emil

and Herman, the Misses Vogel sailed for Germany to visit the Spechts. When Europe burst aflame in August, 1914, Misses Rosa and Josephine were stranded in Hamburg. Funds were wirelessly to them from Fort Worth, they reached England, made their way to the North Sea and home over the far-northern route.

Until after the war had ended, nothing more was known in this country as to the fate of Herman Specht. Meanwhile, his wife had died, and was interred at Galveston. Misses Rosa and Josephine, long since deceased, continued residence in Fort Worth. There, in 1919, Walter Snow of Wichita Falls obtained the only report known to have been given.

Snow, in Fort Worth on business, telephoned the Vogel sisters. They hurried to his downtown hotel for a long visit with him. From a younger relative of Colonel Specht in Germany, they said, had come a brief report after the close of hostilities. During the war the two elderly Spechts, Herman and Emil, had been segregated gradually and quietly with many other men physically incapable of aiding the German war effort in any manner. Food, needed increasingly for German armies, became less and less adequate for the oldsters. Their end had come slowly, but surely, from virtual starvation, the sisters were told.

Some 45 years have passed since the handsome, dignified and popular figure of Col. Herman Specht ceased to move impressively among his friends and neighbors in Wichita County. But despite Shakespeare's renowned declaration about the evil that men do, and the good, Colonel Specht's benefactions of deed and disposition, and those of Clara Vogel Specht, his spouse, were not interred with their bones.

This article appeared in the San Jose Mercury News, June 2, 2001
Submitted by Rodney C. Koenig

W.W. II'S UNKNOWN AMERICAN VICTIMS

Sometimes the wrongs of the past are too painful and too great for one generation to set right.

You need the energy and the outrage of the succeeding generation to wage the battle for truth — people like Brad Houser in San Jose, Karen Ebel in New London, N.H., and Lothar Eiserloh in San Francisco.

They are part of a rising campaign by German-Americans to find out how our government decided to pick up some 31,280 "enemy aliens" and intern them during World War II. And they want the government to acknowledge what it did — to them, their parents or their grandparents.

By now, many Americans know the story of 120,000 Japanese and Japanese-Americans who were forced to leave their homes and bring what they could carry to barren internment camps in America's interior. They might even know that an additional 2,000 were Japanese from Latin America, picked up so the United States would have prisoners to exchange with Japan.

What's less well-known is that it also happened to German and Italian families in this country and in Latin America.

These were the questionable ones, who had leadership positions in groups often social in nature, people whose names had been reported by anyone who had a suspicion — well-founded or not — or perhaps an ax to grind. They were interned in camps throughout the Great Plains, the Midwest and Texas.

The numbers are smaller; the story's virtually the same.

And in terms of human tragedy, just as costly, just as painful.

"It was a terrible injustice," said Belmont historian John Christgau. "People were ripped and torn from their families. . . . The only opportunity they had to declare what their loyalties were was a five-minute hearing in camp that was a kangaroo court."

I'm thinking of Mathias and Johanna Eiserloh, who first came to America brimming with hope and idealism — and ended up ruined by the 14-year ordeal. I'm thinking of Eddie Friede, a German Jew who miraculously escaped the horrors of a concentration camp only to be picked up in San Francisco and put behind barbed wire in this country. Or Paul Lameyer, whose internment, documents indicate, might have had more to do with his child custody battle with his estranged wife than with any Nazi support.

"If the story isn't told soon, pretty soon nobody will know it happened," said Brad Houser, a San Jose electrical engineer whose grandfather, Lameyer, was interned in Fort Lincoln, N.D.

Locked away

In the days after the Dec. 7, 1941, bombing of Pearl Harbor, some 31,280 "enemy aliens" were swept up — ostensibly because of possible allegiances to the Axis forces. Among them were about 10,000 Germans and 3,000 Italians, Christgau said. The rest were Japanese and smatterings of other European groups.

Pearl Harbor forever changed the lives of Lothar Eiserloh and his family. He was an American-born Ohio schoolboy in 1941 when his father, Mathias, was picked up by the FBI and whisked off to an internment camp.

Losing everything

Overnight, neighbors shunned them and customers no longer bought chickens from his mother. Their bank account was frozen. Unable to survive, they lost the house and, by 1943, the desperate family joined Mathias in the Crystal City, Texas, internment camp. Lothar was 8. His sister, Ingrid, 13; Ensi, just 2.

"Just the week before I'd been pledging allegiance to the flag in school, then I get there and I'm looking up at guard towers and men holding machine guns," Eiserloh recalled.

In January 1945, in the middle of the war, the family survived a harrowing deportation to Germany for a prisoner exchange. Eiserloh's brother, Guenther, was born on the train that took them to New York, where they were put on the S.S. Gripsholm. His weakened mother and the sickly infant spent the entire 14-day journey to Marseille, France, in the infirmary, and suffered in winter cold

during the hours of their "exchange" in Bregenz, Switzerland. When they finally settled in Johanna's hometown, the Gestapo set upon them, beat up Mathias and imprisoned him, apparently on suspicion of being a spy for the Allies.

German-American internees suffered

"I remember my father saying, 'I never want to have anything to do with Europe anymore — all they do is fight wars, ancient battles, over and over again,'" said Eiserloh, now 66 and living in the Ingleside Terrace neighborhood of San Francisco. They

had immigrated to America to avoid that.

After the war, as American citizens, 11-year-old Lothar and his sister Ingrid, 17, were repatriated under their aunt's care in 1947. They did not see their parents or younger siblings again until 1956, when the U.S. government finally let them back in. By then, his father was 60. He was a broken man who knew he would never be employed again as a civil engineer, Eiserloh said. He died five years later.

Action in Congress

"I am so outraged about it — it just fuels me," said Karen Ebel, who is now supporting the "Wartime Treatment Study Act," a bill being drafted by Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wis. It would establish a commission to investigate and document what happened. And the arcane law that allowed this to happen is still on the books, which means it could still happen to others, she said.

Italian-Americans were able to get a similar bill passed and signed late last year. Now the groundswell is beginning to build for German-Americans to do the same.

There's some unfinished business we need to attend to. I think it's clear what we need to do. Those wronged are dying daily.



SPECIAL TO THE MERCURY NEWS

Mathias and Johanna Eiserloh, married in 1923 in Ohio after immigrating to the United States, were sent back to Germany after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Here are some resources for those who want to learn more about the internment of German-Americans during World War II.

"America's Invisible Gulag: A Biography of German American Internment & Exclusion in World War II" (Peter Lang Publishing House, 2000) by Stephen Fox.

"A Prison Called Hohenasperg: An American Boy Betrayed by His Government During World War II" (Universal Publishers, 1999) by Arthur D. Jacobs.

"Triangle of Hate" (University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1981) by C. Harvey Gardiner.

Phoenix resident and former internee Art Jacob's Web site contains a wealth of information and links to a German-American discussion group, legislative updates and related legislation:
www.fortimes.com/internment/

This article appeared in the April 4, 2001, Wall Street Journal
Submitted by Karl Micklitz

By CECILIE ROHWEDDER

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

LUBBOCK, Texas—He is the best-selling German author of all time—way ahead of Goethe, Hermann Hesse or Thomas Mann. His detailed descriptions of cowboys and Indians, prairies and canyons, written to great acclaim in the 19th century, shaped what generations of Germans have thought of the U.S. Because of him, Germans are wild about the West, and many never lose their love for Winnetou, a brave Apache chief, and Old Shatterhand, a German-born frontiersman, who are the fictional heroes of his novels.

Now, long after his death in 1912, the cult of Karl May is finally coming to the U.S. Texas Tech University here in Lubbock recently held a symposium on the writer and plans a Karl May archive. Language students read his works in German. At the University of North Dakota, Indian Studies classes include Winnetou movies.

Dana College in Blair, Neb., runs a student exchange with Bad Segeberg, a German town that produces Karl May plays outdoors every summer. A May exhibit is touring Arizona. And the pioneer museum in Crosbyton, a tiny cowboy town near Lubbock, has dedicated a display to him—complete with 55 books, a German flag and a film poster showing Winnetou on a white horse.

"We think Karl May had extrasensory perception because he described this place so well without ever having been here," says museum director Verna Anne Wheeler.

May (pronounced "My") never saw the Southwest, though he was in America once for four months. A convicted thief and swindler, he did much of his writing in prison. Yet his tales have sold a hundred million books, to fans including Adolf Hitler, Albert Einstein and Helmut Kohl.

"Most travel books that I've read bored me, but never a Karl May book," Einstein once said.

May's works are indeed reasonably accurate portrayals of the tribes and terrain of the Southwest. But they intrigue U.S. scholars more as an insight into Germany and the escapist, romantic and idealistic longings that help explain the German national character. The freedom and space of May's treeless plains could not be more different from the crowded, regulated country confined in the center of Europe.



Karl May

Karl May's Love Of the Wild West Is Suddenly Mutual

"Karl May gave the Germans their fantasy," says Meredith McClain, director of the Southwest Center for German Studies at Texas Tech, who is writing a book on him. "Understanding people's fantasies helps to understand who they are."

Toward the end of the 19th century when May was writing, he stoked his people's nascent wanderlust. Later, East Germans banned from traveling under communism devoured his books. But even in western Germany, the writer's world kept its allure. To this day, Germany has hundreds of Wild West clubs. On warm summer weekends, they meet to play cowboys and Indians—often in chaps and war paint—or travel to Karl May plays performed on open-air stages across the country.

Germans also make pilgrimages to cowboy country itself. They are the most numerous international visitors to Arizona, where the lure of the Old West remains so strong that Lufthansa started nonstop service to Phoenix late last month. At Arizona's booth at a recent tourism fair in Berlin, everyone knew of Karl May. "Karl May got a lot wrong about American Indians," says Ben Sherman, president of the Western American Indian Chamber. "But I like what he is doing for tourism."

In Lubbock, Ms. McClain has founded "Winnetours," a small nonprofit travel venture catering to the Karl May crowd. The professor first heard of May at a 1979 conference in Bonn. When she introduced herself, mentioning her home on the plains surrounding Lubbock called Llano Estacado, the Germans suddenly came to life. "They all knew more about the place than I did," she recalls, from reading Karl May.

Colorful Life

May wrote 80 books, a third of them set in the American West. One of 14 children of a poor weaver, he was born in 1842, and was nearly blind until the age of four. He served four jail terms—one for taking another man's watch, tobacco pipe and cigar holder, another for riding a stolen horse across his native Saxony like an outlaw cowboy.

In the prison library, May discovered magazine articles on Indian wars, the Civil War and the California gold rush.

* * *

German Who Brought Cowboys
To the Rhineland Is Winning
Fans Beyond the Mississippi

Soon he started writing his own books. They had titles like "The Son of the Bear Hunter" or "The Spirit of the Llano Estacado," and they told gripping tales of bravery and adventure. In many of them, the white man was described as greedy rancher, corrupt cavalryman and brutal foe of the brave and noble Indian. As sales of the books took off, May began to tell tall tales about his life. He called himself doctor and claimed that he was the real Old Shatterhand. "My works aren't just the fruit of long and laborious studies, but the result of nearly 30 years of travel, deprivation and danger," he wrote his Czech publisher in 1898. "They have literally flown out of me with the blood of wounds, whose scars I still bear on my body."

In reality, May didn't take his first trip abroad until 1900, when he and his wife visited the pyramids in Egypt. Later, when he visited the U.S., the closest he got to the Wild West was upstate New York. But back home, nobody cared. Germans and Austrians gobbled up his books and flocked to his readings. At one event in Munich, firefighters had to break up the crowd with water cannons. At a lecture in Vienna, just days before May died, 3,000 came to listen.

Experts argue about whether May was an early promoter of Nazi thought. His books have strong religious overtones, and their heroes are Indians—hardly role models for Hitler's racism. But their simplistic distinctions between good and bad—and May's worship of weaponry and willpower—lent themselves to Nazi abuse. In addition, race plays a prominent role in the books. In the preface to one Winnetou novel, May predicted that all races would unite into one superior *edelmensch*, or noble human. The Nazis embellished this rich material with ideology of their own. To claim the popular Winnetou for themselves, for instance, they called him "a prototype of the Indian-Germanic race" in a preface to May's fourth Winnetou novel, "Winnetou's Heirs."

"In Karl May you find all the imperial and expansionist fantasies of the Kaiser Reich," says Reinhold Wolff, chairman of the Karl May Society in Germany. "He did exactly what best-selling authors do: They reflect the dreams of their times."

This article appeared in the Fayette County Record, April 17, 2001

Submitted by Rodney C. Koenig

THE HEINTZE MUSEUM

August Heintze of La Grange was not only a highly successful businessman, but also an enthusiastic collector of the unique. His monumental collection of rare, odd and valuable articles was so distinctive in character and so diverse in its composition that it was in a class by itself among private collections in the late 1800s and early twentieth century.

A German by birth, the son of a merchant, Mr. Heintze received a thorough education that whetted his appetite to begin collecting curious oddities as early as 1863.

After emigrating to Texas in 1873, Mr. Heintze moved to Fayette County, where he established a store in Warrenton. In 1888, he moved to La Grange, where he was involved in several successful business ventures, followed by the organization of the Heintze-Speckels Company, the largest business and finest department store in the county. Presently, the Heritage Hallmark shop is located in this building. He housed his extensive collection in

five rooms on the second floor of this business.

Mr. Heintze had people from around the world collecting for him, including the traveling salesmen in Texas, who supplied him with information for securing relics. His enthusiasm and ample purse made his methods of collecting quite effective.

His collection, which was worth over \$50,000 in 1914, was so massive that it spilled over into several other buildings, as well as his home, with many of the thousands of artifacts not properly labeled or displayed. His diverse collection ranged from the life-size figure of a general officer in full costume to the tiniest gold coin ever minted. There were 25,000 postage stamps; approximately 5000 coins -including Roman, Egyptian and Phoenician specimens; the finest collection in America of printed currency from around the world; a priceless Bible; a mummy from the Fifth Dynasty of Egypt; jewels from

crown collections; relics of soldiers and patriots, including swords and guns from many famous battles; a ledger owned by Benjamin Franklin; papers of Lincoln; a piece of the tree under which Santa Anna was held prisoner, and relics of the assassin of President McKinley.

After Mr. Heintze's death, his collection gradually disappeared, some to unscrupulous curiosity seekers who pilfered items out of the dusty, neglected museum. The majority was sold bit by bit during the depression. Some of the collection was acquired by the Witte Museum in San Antonio and the San Jacinto Museum in Houston. A few items were kept by the family, but the vast majority of this phenomenal collection is again dispersed around the world, from whence it came.

by Carolyn Meiners

This article appeared in the Chicago Tribune, December 26, 2000

Submitted by Sheryl Brown

Favorite holiday memories

Special cookies

CHICAGO—When I was a kid, the "C" in Christmas stood for cookies. The women in my family, didn't go to a mall after Thanksgiving, they started baking. My paternal grandmother made sugar-cookie Santas and gingerbread men. Do we dare bite off a leg or arm?

On my mother's side, cookie making was a ritual which revolved around a recipe brought by ancestors from Germany. It called for ingredients measured out by weight, not cups, and included a pinch of "baker's ammonia," whatever that is. My aunt or my mother would get

it from the local pharmacist. He gave them the small amount, without charge, and wished them a "Merry Christmas."

The German name for these cookies means "small little butter breads." This is a misnomer because they are nothing like bread. They are thin,

sweet, and cut into delightful shapes...stars, hearts, trees, moons and circles.

My mom and her sisters would gather on the appointed day. The dough was prepared ahead of time and cooled. Each had her role in the operation... the "rolling;" the "cutting." One person decorating, and another taking them in and out of the oven. Of course, they made double batches because we needed so many for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and as gifts for visiting cousins and friends. By the end of the afternoon, the dining room table was covered with cooling cookies.

The goal in preparation was to roll them as thin as possible. Eventually, the task of rolling fell to my sister and me. I remember the first year my sister and I took up the formidable responsibility of "rolling," we heard comments like "roll them thinner, girls!" We did our best, and after a few years, we had those cookies looking like potato chips.

So much work went into the production of these gems, I sometimes stashed a few of my share so that they could be eaten gradually, and thus

more appreciated. More than once, I found these hidden treasures months later, having forgotten about them in the New Year.

We've tried to keep this tradition, even bringing boys into the process. We want to pass on one of our favorite Christmas memories...laughing, working together, seeing, smelling, tasting, and, most of all, that memory of loving hands rewarding the "child" in all of us with a sample from that very first sheet from oven.

This article appeared in the San Antonio Express-News, October 25, 2000
Submitted by Theresa Gold

By JOHN GRIFFIN
EXPRESS-NEWS DINING EDITOR

NEUSTADT/AISCH, Germany — I arrived here just in time for the launch of Munich's famed Oktoberfest, but instead of joining the throngs in beer halls, I opted for the sanity and relative sobriety of my family a few hours away.

In a way, the foam-capped steins of the massive celebration might have made for a rosier time, at least as far as beer was concerned. When you're surrounded by a host of excellent brews, you don't always want to see the real world surrounding you. And, sad to say, what's happened to German beer lately isn't all wonderful.

True, every German beer you buy will proudly advertise that it has been crafted according to the Rheinheitsgebot, or "purity law," of 1516. But, after almost 500 years, the German people seem to take what that means for granted. And more and more, they're taking beer for granted.



JUANITO GARZA/STAFF

Back in 1970, when I made my first trip to Neustadt/Aisch, most every small town had its own independent brewery that supplied villagers with enough pilsner, hefe-weiss and special brews to keep them happy. Today, far too many of those have gone dry through mismanagement or simply because profits weren't large enough. In my mother's hometown, Uffenheim, the old brewery is now a shopping plaza complete with coffee shop and Thai restaurant, while in Neustadt, the brewery has been taken over by EKV, just one of the many mega-beers to emerge.

To be trendy, Germans have begun ordering imported beers.

That wouldn't be a problem, however, if the imports were from nearby Belgium or England. But no. Their idea of an import is Budweiser. It's true that most claim they don't care for the flavor, but the label on the can shows everyone else that they're drinking something that costs more.

Apparently someone decided that not enough women were drinking beer, so they decided to change that with the Ra-

der, which is a mixture of beer and the local equivalent of 7-Up. In short, a German version of the British shandy, which was originally made of beer and lemonade.

It's not so bitter, my sister would claim every night as she mixed herself a glass.

Bitterness is the whole point of beer, I would counter. Hops are bitter and they're added largely for flavor.

It wasn't a war worth waging, though, as I saw many other women ordering the same off bar menus or mixing them at home. Just don't force me to take a taste. I can still remember the strange, metallic flavor of the one, and hopefully only, shandy I've ever had — and that was 22 years ago.

The German beers I drank were largely wonderful — tart hefe-weissbiers with just the right cloudiness or brilliantly bitter pilsners. But the majority were also beers that I could get back in the States: Paulaner, Warsteiner, Bitburger, EKV, Salvator, Celebrator. The good news is that, as expensive as some of these are as imports, they will tide me over until I can return.

This article appeared in the San Antonio *Express-News*, December 15, 2000
Submitted by Frances Heimer Copeland

Guenther to honor carriers

By **MELISSA S. MONROE**
EXPRESS-NEWS BUSINESS WRITER

C.H. Guenther & Son Inc. — better known to many in the past as Pioneer Flour Mills — will sponsor a lunch for San Antonio Express-News carriers Saturday as part of an ongoing celebration of the company's 150th anniversary. The lunch will commemorate a part of the company's history: For two decades starting in the 1920s, Pioneer President Er-

hard Guenther, the founder's son, every year sponsored a Christmas dinner at the Gunter Hotel for the city's "newsboys." The newsboys, in return, serenaded Guenther on his birthday.

In the 1920s and '30s, the newspaper was delivered by boys and young men, while today, most delivery people are adults of both sexes.

Bill Cothren, executive vice president at Guenther, said that about 900 carriers are expected at the event, which will be held in several parts of the city.

"We wanted to do it, because it's part of our history and culture," he said.

In 1851, Carl Hilmar Guenther, a German emigrant, began construction of his Texas mill on 150 acres near Fredericksburg. To find a bigger market for his flour, he bought land along the San Antonio River south of down-

town in 1859, when the city's population was 10,000, and began operations in 1860.

Last year, Pioneer Flour Mills changed its name back to C.H. Guenther & Son Inc. — the legal designation since 1898. With more than 725 employees, there are plants in the Alamo City, Dallas and Knoxville.

The noon carriers' lunch will be at 1407 Hoefgen St.; 5008 Service Center Drive; 10556 Sentinel St.; 7420 Reindeer Trail; 5405 Bandera Road; and 12095 Starcrest Drive.

mmonroe@express-news.net

This article appeared in the San Antonio Express News, April 27, 2001
Submitted by Frances Copeland



DELICIA LOPEZ/STAFF

Rennie Guenther compahs with the tuba as Hermann's Happiness Polkateers swing to the 'Chicken Dance.'

He's always horning in on the fun

BY JIM BEAL JR.
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

Rennie Guenther just kind of fell into playing tuba.

"I started playing clarinet at New Braunfels Junior High in about '51 or '52. The band director said he had too many clarinet players so he asked me what I wanted to play instead. I was a 60- or 80-pound runt, and I told him I wanted to play tuba," Guenther, 60, says. "I picked up a sousaphone and I fell. Luckily the sousaphone fell on me."

From that less-than-auspicious start, Guenther, a tuba-playing legacy whose grandfathers both played the big horns, has become a fixture at

Hermann's Happiness during Fiesta and at Wurstfest. With his bumper sticker-covered horn, Guenther worked for years with Ed Kadeleck and the Bavarian Village Band.

When Kadeleck moved to Panama, Guenther, who also sings in four languages and yodels, put together the Happy Travelers with his wife, Sandy (drums), and the wife-and-husband team of Jewell Blang (keyboards) and Bob Blang (accordion). The quartet tours the country playing German and Czech classics as well as country songs with a German accent.

"The music is going back to the roots of German, Czech and Polish heritage," he said. "This

is the music the settlers brought over. We're trying to preserve the heritage of polka music and we need to get some younger people in. The Spanish music around here is bringing young people in and it's exciting. We need to do the same with German music."

So, Rennie, what about playing "Beer Barrel Polka" for the mil-

lionth time?

"There are songs you love to hate," he says with a big laugh. "Beer Barrel Polka," "Edelweiss," "The Chicken Dance." But the people want them and we're there to play music for the people. We enjoy making people happy and when we don't enjoy it, we'll hang it up."

This article appeared in the German newspaper Wilhelmshavener Zeitung, Sep. 1, 1999

Submitted by Flora von Roeder

English Translation by Terry L. Smart

Der Kriegsbeginn am 1. September 1939

Erstmal Ferien „auf Kriegszeit“

Guntraud Schepker war damals gerade in die Schule gekommen

Von Annette Laug

Neustadtgödens. Als vor 60 Jahren die deutsche Armee in Polen einmarschierte, war Guntraud Schepker noch ein kleines Mädchen, gerade erst 6 1/2 Jahre alt. Sie lebte mit ihren Eltern auf der großväterlichen Landwirtschaft in Neustadtgödens. An den Kriegsbeginn hat noch sehr plastische Erinnerungen.

Am Tag zuvor war sie mit ihrem Vater auf die Pferdeweide gegangen um die Tiere nach Hause zu holen. Da war ein Flugzeug sehr tief über sie hinweggeflogen. „Man konnte fast die Leute drin sitzen sehen.“ Aber das Hoheitszeichen war ihnen völlig fremd. Zu Hause haben sie im Brockhaus nachgeschlagen und festgestellt: Es war ein Englisches.

Ihre Mutter war an dem Tag spät von Besorgungen in Jever zurückgekehrt. Abends sagte sie zu ihrem Mann: „Vater, soll ich dir was sagen? Morgen ist Krieg.“

„Am andern Tag war dann Krieg“, sagt Guntraud Schepker. Sie haben es erst nachmittags aus der Zeitung erfahren, denn Radio hatten sie noch nicht. Die Kinder bekamen Schulferien, zunächst auf Kriegszeit, wie es hieß, schließlich sollte es sich um einen Blitzkrieg handeln. „Nach drei Wochen haben sie uns dann aber wiedergeholt, es sollte doch wohl länger dauern“, erinnert sie sich.



Guntraud Schepker war im September '39 sechs Jahre alt.

Sie ahnte nichts Gutes, denn Krieg war etwas Schlimmes, das wusste sie aus den Erzählungen ihrer Großmutter und ihrer Mutter.

Die erinnerten sich auch, dass die Männer zum 1. Weltkrieg noch mit „Hurra“ aufgebrochen waren.

Für den 1. September 1939 kann sich aber keiner an ein „Hurra“ erinnern.

Ziemlich bald sei es dann schlechter geworden mit der Versorgungslage, berichtet Schepker. Es gab Lebensmittelkarten, und das Vieh im Stall wurde gezählt. Natürlich hatten alle das ein oder andere Schwein diskret hinter den Büschen versteckt, und später sollte man ohne die Schwarz-Schlachtung kaum noch über die Runden kommen.

Durch die Nähe zu Wilhelmshaven wurde auch Neustadtgödens schon bald von Fliegern angegriffen. Guntraud Schepker erinnert sich an die vielen Nächte, die sie

in Kleidung im Bett verbracht hat, denn oft gab es Alarm, und man musste in den kalten, klammen Erdbunker. An die „Spucksuppe“ erinnert sie sich, die sie gerne mochte: Milchsuppe mit Weizen angedickt, aus dem die Spelzen nicht erst herausgesucht wurden. Die Kinder spuckten sie einfach über den Tisch, bis es dem Vater zu bunt wurde.

Sie erinnert sich auch an die Kinderlandverschickung 1941 nach Damme, von der sie magerer als zuvor mit Fieber, Rippenfell- und Lungenentzündung zurückkam. Die Zuteilung Apfelsinen hatte wohl die „Tanten“, nicht aber die Kinder erreicht.

Sie erinnert sich an die endlosen Fußmärsche, von Wiesmoor nach Hause, weil nachmittags der Schulbus oft kaputt war.

Sie erinnert sich an das klappern der Luftminen, und wie sie einmal, da war sie etwa acht, bei Alarm noch schnell auf den Hühnerstall kletterte, um einen Apfel zu pflücken. Von dort sah sie die Flugzeuge, wie sie über dem Marxer Flugplatz ihre Bomben ausklinkten.

Sie erinnert sich, dass ihre Eltern und ihr Großvater Jakob mit den Nazis nichts am Hut hatten.

Sie erinnert sich an die vielen Übungen in der Schule, wie man sich bei Gas- und Granatangriffen zu verhalten hatte und an ihren Vater, der morgens um sechs auf der Kuhweide von einem Nachbarn überzeugt werden sollte, doch in „die Partei“ einzutreten.

Auf Plattdeutsch sagte er schlicht: „Deshalb musst du doch die Kuh nicht erschrecken“, und damit war das Thema durch.

THE WAR BEGAN SEPTEMBER 1ST 1939

The First War-time School Holiday

Guntraud Schepker at that time had just started to school

(by Annette Lang)

Neustadtgödens. When the German army marched into Poland sixty years ago, Guntraud Schepker was only a young girl not yet seven years old. She and her parents lived on her grandfather's farm at Neustadtgödens. She still has very vivid recollections of the beginning of the war.

On the day before the war started, she went with her father into a pasture to round up their horses. An aircraft passed overhead, flying extremely low. "One almost could see the men sitting in it." But she and her father could not recognize the national insignia on the plane. Back at home, they looked for the emblem in the Brockhaus Encyclopedia and discovered it was British.

That day Guntraud's mother was late returning from errands in Jever, and that evening she said to her husband, "Father, I should tell you that it is being said war will begin tomorrow."

"And the war did begin the following day," said Guntraud Schepker. She first learned of it that afternoon from the newspaper because they then had no radio. At this outset of the war, children were given what was called a school holiday, an action taken due to the Blitzkrieg. "After three weeks, we returned to school, but the holiday ought to have lasted longer," she recalled.

She was expecting nothing good, for war was something bad. She knew this from stories her mother and grandmother told.

They remembered that men had cheered "Hurrah!" when the First World War began.

Guntraud remembered no "Hurrahs" on September 1, 1939.

Things soon became worse due to shortages, reported Schepker. There were food rationing cards, and when they came round to count livestock in the barns, everyone of course discreetly hid one or two hogs in the bushes. Later on, one scarcely could make ends meet without illegally slaughtering their animals.

Because it was near Wilhelmshaven, Neustadtgödens too was attacked by planes. Guntraud Schepker remembered the many nights she wore her clothes to bed because there might be an air raid warning, and everyone had to go into the cold, clammy air raid shelter. She could still remember the "spit soup" that she liked so well. It was milk soup, thickened with grains from which the kernels had not been removed. The children would spit the kernels across the table until it got too crazy for the father!

She also remembered the deportation of the children to Damme in 1941. She returned home thinner and with fever, pleurisy, and pulmonary inflammation. The rationing of oranges by then had begun for adults, but not yet for children.

She remembered the countless times she walked home from school at Wiesmoor because the afternoon school bus often was broken down.

She remembered one occasion when she was about eight years old the raid alarm sounded after she had climbed atop the chicken house to pick an apple. From there she could see aircraft dropping bombs over Marxer Airfield.

She remembered that her parents and her grandfather Jacob would have nothing to do with the Nazis.

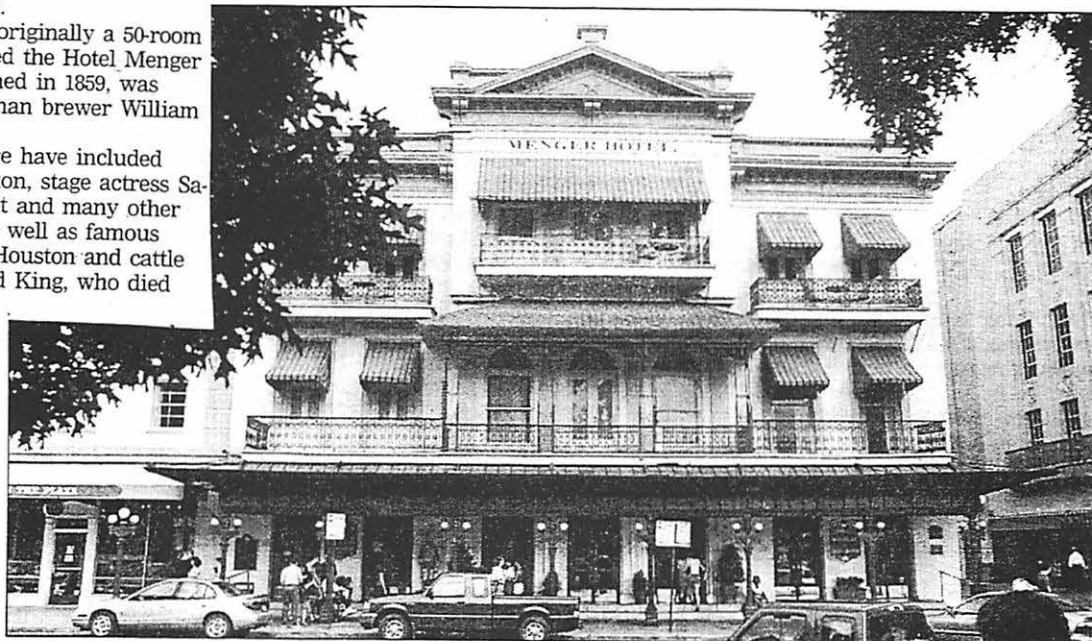
She remembered many drills at school, as everyone prepared for poison gas and bombing attacks, and how at six o'clock one morning out in the cow pasture a neighbor was trying to convince her father that he should join the Nazi Party.

In Plattdeutsch, her father replied "Quiet, you must not frighten the cows!" And that was all there was to that.

■ The 320-room Menger Hotel, one of the first hotels where guests in the 1800s could order ice water, is considered one of the best preserved hotels in the United States.

The hotel, originally a 50-room building called the Hotel Menger when it opened in 1859, was built by German brewer William Menger.

Guests there have included President Nixon, stage actress Sarah Bernhardt and many other celebrities, as well as famous Texans Sam Houston and cattle baron Richard King, who died there in 1885.



BAHRAM MARK SOBHANI/SPECIAL TO THE EXPRESS-NEWS

The Menger Hotel in San Antonio built by German-Texan William Menger opened in the year 1859. The hotel still operates at its original site by Alamo Plaza.

This article appeared in the San Antonio Express-News, May 13, 2001
Submitted by Tom C. Frost, Jr.

Marker to laud medical pioneer Herff

By CARMINA DANINI
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

The life of Dr. Ferdinand Ludwig Herff, a German-born physician and medical pioneer who settled in San Antonio in 1850, is being commemorated with an official Texas historical marker.

The marker is to be unveiled at 4 p.m. Monday at the River Walk level façade of the Nix Professional Building between bridges spanning the rivers on Navarro and Presa streets.

Herff's house and doctor's office, at 308 E. Houston St., where Walgreen's now stands at the corner of Houston and Navarro streets, were demolished shortly after his death. The Nix occupies what used to be the back part of the Herff property.

The physician was ahead of his time in many respects and not just in medicine, noted Tom Frost Jr., senior chairman of Cullen/Frost Bankers Inc. and a great-great-grandson of Herff.

"What struck me was that the house deed was in his wife's name," Frost said. "He must have



HERFF

been a wonderful man. I wish I'd met him."

Frost credited San Antonio Express-News columnist Maury Maverick Jr. with the idea for a marker in

Herff's honor.

In a column nearly three years ago, Maverick suggested the physician, who was instrumental in founding the city's first infirmary, now known as Christus Santa Rosa Hospital, be recognized.

"He sought social justice and good medicine for people," Maverick said. "He was the best of the best."

Because there was no hospital or clinic in San Antonio until 1869, Herff operated on patients anywhere he could set up, said Juanita Herff Chipman, a great-great-granddaughter.

"He performed an operation underneath a chinaberry tree and another on a kitchen table with a desperado's knife at his back,"

said Chipman, who inherited her great-great-grandfather's operating instruments.

Known as the "Old Doctor," Herff even performed a gall bladder operation on a Texas Ranger at the old Veramendi House, with several people, including fellow Ranger Big Foot Wallace, looking on.

Herff was born on Nov. 29, 1820, to the aristocratic Von Herff family in Darmstadt, Germany. He studied in Bonn and in Berlin and in 1843 received his medical degree at Giessen. A gifted surgeon, he was only 23 when he was appointed a surgeon in the Hessian army.

He came to Texas in 1847 with other German immigrants seeking to establish a utopian colony called Bettina. The colony failed a year later and Herff returned to Germany.

After their wedding in May 1849, he and bride Mathilde traveled to Texas. They lived briefly in New Braunfels before moving to San Antonio in early 1850.

Herff removed the "von" in his surname when he and his wife became American citizens.

He was one of the first surgeons in the United States to perform a hysterectomy; he performed the first cataract operation in Texas; he was one of the 35 founding members of the Texas Medical Association in 1853 and served on the Texas medical examination board for years.

Even before the advent of the germ theory led by Louis Pasteur and Joseph Lister, Herff was an advocate of doctors scrubbing their hands before surgery to avoid infecting patients.

One of South Texas' most distinguished and respected physicians, he also treated many patients from Mexico, including the family of Francisco I. Madero, who launched the 1910 Mexican Revolution from San Antonio.

Herff was 87 when he performed his last operation. He died May 18, 1912, at the age of 91 and is buried at City Cemetery No. 1 on Commerce Street.

➔ MEMBERSHIP IN THE 505 CLUB HAS INCREASED TO ELEVEN ←
SEE PAGE 112

This article appeared in the San Antonio Express-News, May 6, 2001
 Submitted by Bridget G. Smart

SAN ANTONIO'S BEETHOVEN HALL ONCE HOSTED THE BEST LIVE PERFORMANCES

Beethoven Hall could be thought of as three buildings, or at least three distinct evolutionary stages: the structure that was ravaged by fire (call it B1), its reconstruction (B2) and the current, much-modified structure (B3).

The full name of the first two versions was Beethoven Maennerchor Hall, named for the men's chorus that built and ran it. At its peak, the German-American singing society boasted about 250 members.

Plans for the music hall (B1) started in August 1894, says Charles Bennett Myler in "A History of the English-speaking Theater in San Antonio Before 1900" (1968, University of Texas doctoral dissertation).

By selling \$20 subscriptions, the group was soon able to buy land at 418-420 S. Alamo St. Local architect Albert F. Beckmann drew up the plans, and the brick-and-ironclad hall was built for about \$25,000.

Dedicated on Nov. 21, 1895, B1 "was mainly used for school commencements," says Myler, as well as "amateur and professional concerts . . . amateur theatricals and special programs."

The hall was so successful that the Maennerchor engaged architect James Wahrenberger to plan an enlarged



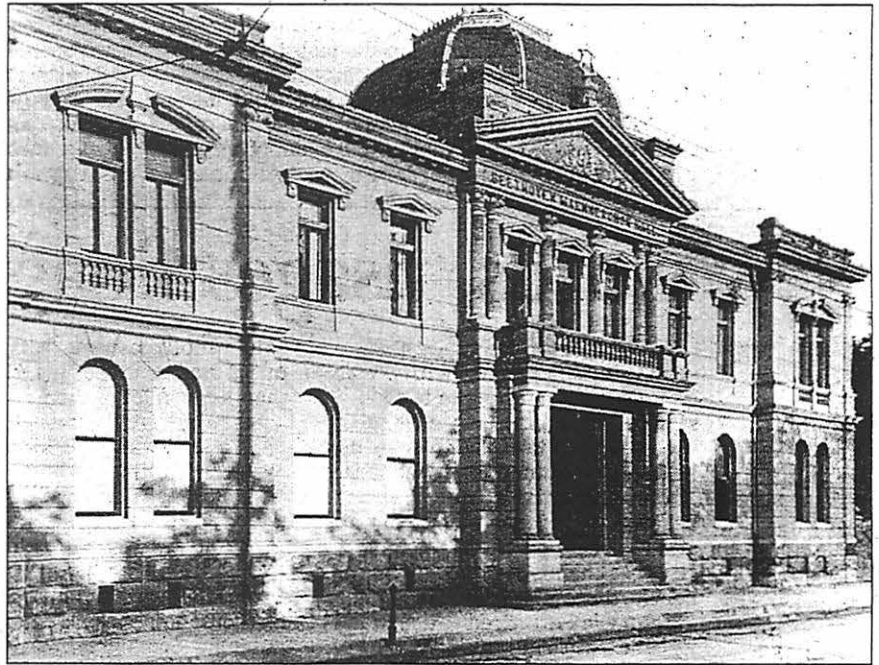
PAULA ALLEN

Beethoven Hall. Local architectural historian Theresa Gold says his grandiose design would have seated 3,000, but it was never built.

On Oct. 31, 1913, much of B1 was destroyed by fire. Almost immediately, the group decided to rebuild on the site. (Parts of B1 survived, but much of the surviving structure was unsound and had to be demolished.)

Leo M.J. Dielmann was the restoration architect. "Many improvements are being made over the old building," says the San Antonio Express, Feb. 22, 1914. B2's classical facade was similar to the original, while new fire-proofing measures included more interior brick and a roof suspended on steel trusses.

Movable seats on the first floor allowed for dancing, and a new "complete set of scenery for the stage enhanced performances."



SAN ANTONIO CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Beethoven Hall has seen many changes in its façade and its function since its dedication in 1895.

The Maennerchor also operated what Gold terms "a very respectable saloon" on the premises.

B2 may have been more ambitious than its predecessor, but its luck wasn't much better. During World War I, anti-German hysteria caused orchestras and opera companies to drop German composers from their repertoires. The influenza epidemic of 1918 discouraged public gatherings, and the 18th Amendment (Prohibition) passed in 1919.

Reeling from successive blows to profitability, the Maennerchor sold the hall in 1920 and moved to its present location, 422 Pereida St., in the King William neighborhood.

This was the start of a decline for the once-proud hall, showcase for some of the best-known performers of the day, home of the city's first symphonies and host to Fiesta coronations and statewide singing festivals.

"From those lofty functions, it has indeed sunk low, becoming, among other things, a warehouse," writes Charles Ramsdell in "San Antonio: A Historical and Pictorial Guide" (1959, University of Texas Press). "The nadir was reached in 1924, when it was a meeting place of the Ku Klux Klan."

The building also was used as a dance hall and prize-fight arena, says Gold, and it came under city ownership around 1950.

During street widening in preparation for HemisFair '68, the building's facade was sheared off. Columns and a balcony were removed, windows bricked up, and the entrance was moved to the south side of the building.

After interior renovations, this truncated Beethoven Hall (B3) was used during the fair for the Czech Laterna Magika shows.

During the '70s and '80s, B3 often stood empty while the public debated

its future. There was talk of turning it over to the University of Texas at San Antonio and later to a proposed German Heritage Park.

Meanwhile, the hall was used sporadically for performances by visiting artists. With the Magik Children's Theater as its resident company since 1997,

Beethoven Hall is once again a full-time performance space.

This article appeared in the San Antonio Express-News, June 19, 2001
 Submitted by Bridget G. Smart

'Hairlooms' give exhibit a unique look

BY ROGER CROTEAU
 EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

NEW BRAUNFELS — The museum visitors examined the elaborate wreath closely, with furrowed brows, because instead of flowers or pine boughs, the wreath was weaved from human hair.

"I have never seen anything like it before," said Merideth Sutton, a visitor to the Sophienburg Museum. "That is so amazing. How the heck did they do that? It's very intriguing."

"And we thought some of those Aboriginal tribes were strange," added Shoshanna Lansberg, peering at a pair of earrings made from hair.

In the mid-1800s, German settlers in New Braunfels brought with them one of the more unusual customs from their homeland. They would intricately weave the hair of loved ones, often deceased family members, into wreaths, bouquets or wearable art, in-

cluding watch fobs, earrings and necklaces.

Now very rare collectors' items, the Sophienburg Museum has 16 examples of "hair artistry" on display in a temporary exhibit.

"You could really call it a lost art," says Sophienburg Executive Director Michelle Oatman. "I don't think anybody still does it."

Oatman said the museum usually kept one piece on display and it was always a big hit, especially with schoolchildren. So she decided to dedicate a whole wall to the pieces this summer.

"They are always a show stopper on the tour," she says.

"When you see them in person, they are very beautiful,"

Oatman says. "You would not believe they are human hair. I know some people think it's kind of creepy, but they are a serious collectible on eBay and such."

Hair art was common in the mid-19th century, but the items are very rare now because the hair deteriorates if not stored properly.

Often, women who grew their hair long as children would save the hair and form it into jewelry or bouquets when they married and cut their hair short, as a way to remember their youth. Before the age of photography, the pieces were a way to have a personal keepsake of a deceased loved one.

"It was a big part of German culture," Oatman said. "The detail in the pieces is really amazing."

The hair art display at the Sophienburg Museum will be up through the end of the year. The Sophienburg is in New Braunfels at the corner of Academy and Coll. (Take the Seguin Street Exit 187 off Interstate 35.) Admission is \$5. Call (830) 629-1572 for information.

"When you see them in person, they are very beautiful. You would not believe they are human hair."

MICHELLE OATMAN
 Sophienburg Museum executive director



BAHRAM MARK SOBHANI/SPECIAL TO THE EXPRESS-NEWS

Hair woven into a flower is an example of a lost art form.

The Sophienburg Museum in New Braunfels has brought in 16 very rare collectors' items of hair artistry

Hair artistry gives museum a lock on an unusual exhibit

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Material sent for *The Journal* will not be returned. All materials must include contributor's name, a source and date. All submitted articles must be typed, single spaced, on 8.5x11 white paper, with a margin of no less than .75 inches on all sides. No faxes please. Editor is not responsible for errors or misinformation.

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