

# THE JOURNAL



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## GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

Eva Barnett, Executive Director

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**SECRETARY:** Mary Whigham

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# German-Texan Heritage Society

## 2009 ANNUAL OPERATING FUND DRIVE

The Operating Fund Drive is the largest and most vital component of our overall strategic fundraising plan. Now more than ever, we are seeking your continued support for this fund drive, as we aim to weather the financial downturn with as little disruption of activities as possible. Our goal is to continue to provide our members and the general public with the informative and entertaining programs, events, and publications we're known for. We're decreasing expenses where we can, while also doing our best to garner financial support, both from GTHS members and new avenues, such as corporate sponsors for events and ads in the Journal and on our website.

Thank you for your generous support of the 2008 Operational Fund Drive. Despite the economic climate, we raised \$18,025, 90% of our budgeted goal of \$20,000. We ask for your support again this year to help us achieve our goals of increasing membership and visibility for GTHS. We aim to have every Texan of German descent know who we are, and to get the vast majority of them to join!

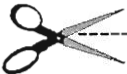
The thoughtful dedication of your gifts, in memory of or in honor of friends or relatives, enriches the fund tremendously. Please also keep in mind that many corporations have matching donation programs, often for retirees too.

Your continued support and generosity for GTHS and the German Free School Guild are vital in our mission of "promoting awareness and preservation of the German cultural heritage of Texas." Donations at any level are greatly appreciated. We encourage you to pledge at your most generous level and are counting on your strong support.

Sincerely,

Charles F. "Chuck" Kalteyer  
Coordinator, Operational Fund

Ewing "Wing" Evans  
President, GTHS



Return lower portion to GTHS Office

I wish to support the 2009 German-Texan Heritage Society Operating Fund Drive at the donation level of:

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chancellor \$5000+       | <input type="checkbox"/> Regent \$2500-\$4999 | <input type="checkbox"/> Dean \$1000-\$2499 | <input type="checkbox"/> Professor \$500-\$999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schoolmaster \$150-\$499 | <input type="checkbox"/> Scholar \$50-\$149   | <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$25-\$49  | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Matching    |

Donation is in honor of \_\_\_\_\_ Donation is in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Send acknowledgement of honor or memorial to:

(name) \_\_\_\_\_ (adr) \_\_\_\_\_

Amount:  
\$

Check enclosed payable to GTHS. Mail to: PO Box 684171, Austin, TX 78768-4171

Charge to my MasterCard / Visa \_\_\_\_\_ exp \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ V-code \_\_\_\_\_  
(3 digit # on back of card)

Please print your name below as you would like it to appear in the Spring 2010 Journal

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Complete section below only if your contact information has changed

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

The German-Texan Heritage Society is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation.  
Donations are tax deductible to the extent the tax code permits and are not considered membership dues.







Founded 1978

# GERMAN GENEALOGY SEMINAR

Saturday, March 14

9:00 am – 3:30 pm

Trinity Lutheran Church

2 Ritchie Road, Woodway, Texas (Waco area)

## Topics:

“All I Know is Great Grandpa Came From Germany” by  
genealogist Liz Hicks

“Growing the Tree: Oral History Methods for Genealogists”  
by Joshua Haaland, Baylor University Institute for Oral  
History

“Genealogical Resources in the Texas Collection at Baylor  
University” by Michael Toon, Librarian, Texas Collection

“Birth to Death: Records in the County Clerk’s Office” by  
Andy Harwell, County Clerk, McLennan County

“Library Resources for Genealogical Research” by Bill  
Buckner, Waco-McLennan County Library

**Registration:** \$35 for GTHS members; \$40 for non-members. Add \$5  
if paying at the door. Doors open at 8:30 am. Lunch included.

For more information, contact Van Massirer at (254) 486-2366 or [vmassirer@yahoo.com](mailto:vmassirer@yahoo.com). To register, contact GTHS at 866-482-4847,  
[info@germantexans.org](mailto:info@germantexans.org) or visit [www.germantexans.org](http://www.germantexans.org).



Founded 1978

## German-Texan Heritage Society German Genealogy Seminar – March 14, 2009

### SPEAKERS

**Liz Nitschke Hicks** is a fourth-generation Texan, descending from German ancestors of Austin, Washington, and Travis Counties. She is the genealogy editor for the German-Texan Historical Society, a past president of Clayton Library Friends, and the founder and manager of the Angel Program for CLF. She has written several articles on using genealogical records that have been published in the *CLF Newsletter*. Liz is also a past contributing editor for "Tree Talk," the publication of the Cherokee County Genealogical Society.

**Joshua Haaland** is an editorial assistant in the Baylor University Institute for Oral History. He holds a BA in History from Willamette University and is currently a second-year master's student in history at Baylor. His ultimate goal is to earn a doctorate in medieval European history. Joshua is also interested in German-Texan history, has studied the treatment of German-Texans during World War I, and has conducted oral history interviews of people from Aleman, a small, German-heritage community in Hamilton County.

**Michael L. Toon** earned a BA in History and Speech from Stephen F. Austin State University in 1971. After working in the Kilgore schools for five years as a speech and hearing therapist, Michael earned an MA in History from SFA. He then worked for several years for the Texas Youth Commission and earned a Master of Library and Information Science Degree from the University of Texas in 1985. He was employed by the University of Texas Library System for a brief period before he came to Baylor University, where he currently is a member of the faculty and serves as Librarian for the Texas Collection.

**Andy Harwell** is a graduate of Baylor University, where he earned a Bachelor of Business Administration. He was elected County Clerk of McLennan County in 1994 and continues to serve in that position. Andy is very active in civic affairs and serves on numerous boards and committees at both the local and state levels. In addition, he has instituted several modernization programs in his office, helping to move the office toward paperless operation. In 2000, Andy was nominated County Clerk of the Year by Area V of the County and District Clerks Association of Texas.

**Bill Buckner** is a fifth-generation Texan who received a BS in Music from Southwestern University and an MS in Library Science from the University of North Texas. Bill is a sought-after speaker for service and historical organizations and is currently working with the Central Texas Area Museum in Salado as a speaker and moderator for its semiannual genealogy workshops. Active in state and national professional library associations, Bill has served as chair of several genealogy committees. With over 18 years of professional experience as a librarian, he has worked for the last 10 years at the Waco-McLennan County Library and currently is the Manager of the Periodicals/Genealogy Division.

#### DRIVING DIRECTIONS:

Trinity Lutheran Church is located about two blocks north of Hwy. 84 in Woodway, a west-side suburb of Waco. If coming from the north, east or south, take Hwy 84 west toward McGregor. Take Ritchie Road exit and turn right on Merrifield Drive, cross Sandalwood, veer slightly to your left, and continue straight ahead a short distance to the church.

If coming from McGregor on Hwy 84, take the Ritchie Road/Poage Drive Exit. (Here it gets a little tricky, so watch the signs and follow these directions closely.) When you get to the overpass, the sign will show Ritchie Road to your right, but you must turn left and cross the overpass. You will be on Merrifield Drive. Continue straight ahead, cross Sandalwood, veer slightly to your left, and continue straight ahead a short distance to the church.





Founded 1978

# GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

## GERMAN GENEALOGY SEMINAR

Saturday, March 14, 2009

PROGRAM:

- 8:30 to 9:00 am Registration, Coffee and Doughnuts
- 9:00 to 9:10 am Welcome, Announcements, GTHS Information
- 9:10 to 10:10 am "All I Know is Great-Grandpa Came From Germany" by Liz Nitschke Hicks, Genealogy Editor, The Journal, German-Texan Heritage Society
- 10:10 to 10:30am **Break**
- 10:30 to 11:30 am "Growing the Tree: Oral History Methods for Genealogists" by Joshua Haaland, Editorial Assistant, Baylor University Institute for Oral History
- 11:30 to 12:30 pm **Lunch**
- 12:30 to 1:30 pm "Genealogical Resources in the Texas Collection at Baylor University" by Michael Toon, Librarian, Texas Collection, Baylor University
- 1:30 to 1:50 pm **Break**
- 1:50 to 2:30 pm "Birth to Death: Records in the County Clerk's Office" by Andy Harwell, County Clerk, McLennan County
- 2:30 to 2:50 pm **Break**
- 2:50 to 3:30 pm "Library Resources for Genealogical Research" by Bill Buckner, Periodicals/ Genealogy Manager, Waco-McLennan County Library

LOCATION: Trinity Lutheran Church, 2 Ritchie Road, Woodway, TX (Waco)  
(See other side for driving directions)

COST: \$35 – Members of the German-Texan Heritage Society  
\$40 – Non Members  
Add \$5 if registering at door

Registration fee includes Lunch

Registration Deadline – March 10



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Names being researched \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee Enclosed \$\_\_\_\_\_ (Call to pay by credit card)

Send to: German-Texan Heritage Society, P.O. Box 684171, Austin, TX 78768-4171  
Contact: Phone 866-482-4847 / Email [info@germantexans.org](mailto:info@germantexans.org) / Web [www.germantexans.org](http://www.germantexans.org)  
Questions: Contact Van & Mary Massirer at (254) 486-2366 or [vmassirer@yahoo.com](mailto:vmassirer@yahoo.com)

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**GTHS ANNUAL MEETING, OCTOBER 9-10  
2009**

The Wingate by Wyndham  
Round Rock, Texas



[www.wingateroundrock.com](http://www.wingateroundrock.com)

Join in on the fun! We'll have an excellent selection of speakers and presentations, delicious food, and exciting entertainment. There will be a silent auction, vendors, and loads of Gemütlichkeit!

Check our website, [www.germantexans.org](http://www.germantexans.org), for updates. Your Summer Journal will have all the details and a registration form

**Do you get the E-Kurier? Send us your email address so you can be put on the list to receive this informative update on things happening with the society and elsewhere**





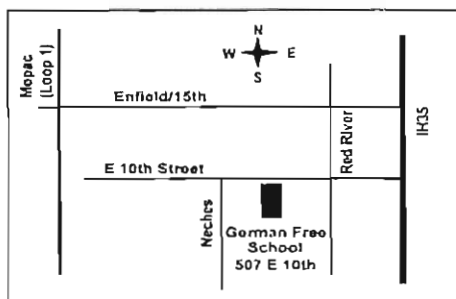
# MAIFEST

**Saturday April 25  
11:00 am – 5 pm**

DELICIOUS GERMAN FOOD  
& BEER  
LIVE GERMAN MUSIC  
FOLK DANCING  
MARIONETTE SHOW  
GERMAN BOOK SALE  
SILENT AUCTION

*featuring*  
Maypole Dance at 1:00 pm

***Come enjoy some German-Texan fun in the  
Gardens of the Historic German Free School***



**German-Texan Heritage Society  
507 East 10<sup>th</sup> St., Austin, TX  
(512) 482-0927**

**[www.GermanTexans.org](http://www.GermanTexans.org)**

**FREE PARKING**

**FREE ADMISSION**

## **MAIFEST 2009 - SILENT AUCTION**

On Saturday April 25<sup>th</sup>, from 11 am to 5 pm, the German-Texan Heritage Society will be holding its fourteenth Annual *Maifest* at our historic Old German Free School headquarters building at 507 East Tenth Street in Austin. This is a traditional celebration of welcoming springtime with music, singing, marionette shows, face painting, balloon art, good food, drinks, wrapping of the maypole, and a SILENT AUCTION.

We invite you to be a part of this community celebration by attending and supporting the auction. Your support will be recognized in our auction literature. Please furnish information to complete the AUCTION DONATION FORM as soon as possible. For additional information please contact the office at 512-482-0927 or toll free at 866-482-4847.

We thank you for helping the German-Texan Heritage Society expand its mission of preservation and educational programs to the community at large.

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUCTION DONATION FORM**

Complete a separate donation form for each item donated.

Solicit new or good used items with a value of \$20 or more.

Collected items and gift certificates for services, merchandise, food, meals, etc. should be received (with the donation form) at the German Free School as early as possible, preferably no later than April 17<sup>th</sup>, so that there is time to prepare the bid sheets.

Donated items will be received at the German Free School Monday, Wednesday, or Friday between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm, or by appointment.

Feel free to reproduce the form as needed, or contact the office at 512-482-0927 for copies by FAX or mail.

### **THE GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY**

The GTHS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to promote the awareness and preservation of the strong German cultural heritage of Texas. One of our goals is that our work will benefit the entire community with the:

Publication of our Journal four times a year

Annual meetings hosted in different cities and towns throughout the state

The Trenckmann Memorial Library at the Free School

Genealogy reference and assistance

German language classes throughout the state

Preservation of the historically significant 1857 German Free School structure and its peaceful garden in the center of Austin

Monthly speaker series and various exhibits

Traditional Christmas program



## GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY 2009 MAIFEST SILENT AUCTION DONATION FORM

**Please Mail or Fax to:** German-Texan Heritage Society      FAX: (512) 482-0636  
 P.O. Box 684171      Phone: (512) 482-0927  
 Austin, TX 78768-4171      Toll Free: 1 (866) 482-4847  
 info@germantexans.org      www.germantexans.org

TODAY'S DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DONOR (Mr., Mrs., Ms., etc): \_\_\_\_\_

BUSINESS NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ CONTACT PERSON: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Item: _____		
Retail Value New: \$ _____	Used: \$ _____	Minimum Bid Request: \$ _____
Description (for bid sheet): _____		
Donor Name: (as you'd like it on bid sheet) _____		

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR PICKUP AND DELIVERY:

**ITEM**

Donor will Deliver \_\_\_\_\_

GTHS will pickup \_\_\_\_\_

**GIFT CERTIFICATE**

Donor will provide \_\_\_\_\_

Donor authorizes GTHS to make certificate \_\_\_\_\_

DONOR SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>ITEM CATEGORY: (check one)</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Art & Photography	<input type="checkbox"/> Automobile
<input type="checkbox"/> Parties & Dining	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation & Travel
<input type="checkbox"/> Special	<input type="checkbox"/> Men <input type="checkbox"/> Ladies
<input type="checkbox"/> Children	<input type="checkbox"/> Home <input type="checkbox"/> Jewelry
<input type="checkbox"/> Sports & Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Pets <input type="checkbox"/> Service

<b>(FOR OFFICE USE ONLY)</b>
Notes: _____
Solicitor's Signature: _____
Solicitor's Phone: _____

***Danke Schön!***  
***Proceeds from the Silent Auction benefit future German-Texan Heritage Society projects.***



**THE JOURNAL OF**  
**THE GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY**  
**VOLUME XXXI, NUMBER 1, SPRING 2009**  
**"Zur Erhaltung der deutschen Tradition"**

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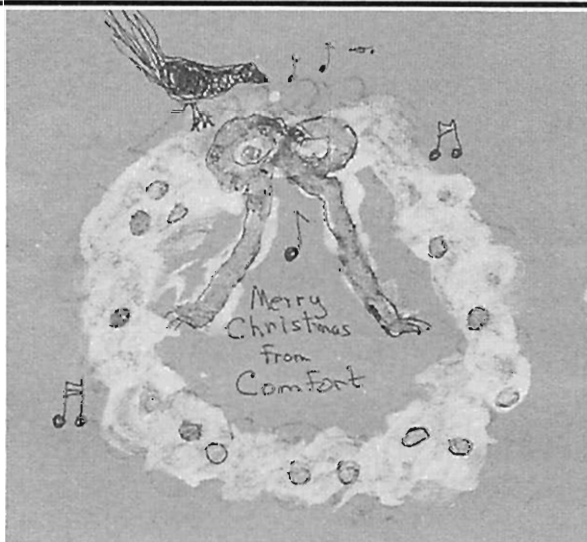
#### OPERATIONS

- 098 Minutes of the November Board Meeting
- 100 Calendar of Events
- 101 Announcements
- Membership Flyer (for YOU to give to a potential member!)

#### Vielen Dank to these contributors

Wilson W. McKinney, Bulverde  
Herb Uecker, Bulverde  
Scott Mahon, Bulverde  
Hans Boas, Austin  
Omar Holguin, Jr., Houston  
Ginger Daily, Houston  
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Daniel Bode, Dayton  
Bill Rodwick, Smithville  
Ensila Eiserloh Bennett,  
Lothar Eiserloh, Karen  
Ebel, and TRACES



Anne Stewart's lovely drawing on her envelope to GTHS for February *Journal* submissions

## *In Memoriam*

### Walter Schumann (GTHS member, 1994-2004)

Described as a "Renaissance Man" with an intense interest in historic preservation and German settlers in Texas, Walter A. Schumann was a world traveler, strategic intelligence officer, nature and archeological tour guide in the Hill Country, and "Amigo" to foreign students of English at Lackland AFB.



Walt Schumann

A private memorial service for Schumann, 79, was held December 6 in the Heartland Funeral Home Chapel in Early near Brownwood, where he had lived for three years before returning to Bulverde last spring. His cremated remains were to be scattered at Medina Lake, according to his wishes.

Schumann died of nature causes in his home in the Wagon Wheel RV Park in Bulverde on November 25, but his body was not found until the next day.

"I believe he truly was 'a Renaissance Man' and that he had a really big heart as a historic preservation advocate," said Herb Uecker, a Bulverde-based archeologist who met Schumann in the late 1980's at a time the retired aerospace industry lobbyist was becoming interested in preservation of archeological resources at the historical Walker Ranch.

"Walt spearheaded the founding of San Antonio's only historic landmark park at the site of the old Walker Ranch, near West Avenue and Nakoma Street in North San Antonio," Uecker said. "He led many history/archeological tours at Walker Ranch, and nature tours at Friedrich Park, Cibolo Nature Center, and Guadalupe River State Park/Honey Creek State Natural Area." He was also a member of the Bexar County Historical Commission for several years, and a member of the Southern Texas Archeological Association.

Schumann's interest in the Walker Ranch site, believed to have been originally Monte Galvan stock ranch that supplied the San Antonio de Valero mission—the Alamo—was undoubtedly spurred by the fact that his great

grandfather passed by there in 1847 as part of a group of German settlers on their way to settle on the Llano River.

He frequently gave a lecture to various groups entitled 'The Drei,' about three famous nineteenth century German Texans, (Ferdinand Herff, Ferdinand Lindheimer, and Johann von Meusebach). Uecker said, "Walt's great grandfather, Louis Reinhart, was at the German-Texan socialist colony of Bettina in 1847 and 1848."

In 1991, Schumann founded the Monte Galvan Preservation Society to protect the ranch's historic and prehistoric resources.

Seven years later his efforts, which included serving as chairman of the park's design advisory committee were rewarded when the first pavilion was dedicated at the Walker Ranch Historic Landmark Park.

Schumann's years as a mid-shipman at the U.S. Naval Academy and in the intelligence community contributed to his interest in international affairs, reflected in his activity for several years as a volunteer "Amigo" to the English students at Lackland who were members of the militaries of many other countries. He would take them on sightseeing, history and nature tours of San Antonio and the Hill Country and established such friendships with several of them that he was later a guest at their homes in the various countries in which they lived.

"I once asked him how many countries he had been to during the course of his career and his retirement years," Uecker said. "He chuckled and replied, 'Let me tell you the six I have not been in since that will be easier and faster,' and then he proceeded to name those six."

Schumann is survived by his former wife, Leona Schumann of Brownwood, his son Grant, daughter Marceta, and grandson Japhoni, all of California.

**Bulverde News, Dec 11, 2008**  
**Wilson W. McKinney Contributing Writer**  
**Courtesy of Herb Uecker, Bulverde, Texas**

## *In Memoriam*

### **Evelyn Sophie Klaus Canfield**

Evelyn Sophie Klaus Canfield, 83, a San Antonio native and since her retirement, a resident of Smithville, Texas died Tuesday, June 17, 2008 in Smithville. Mrs. Canfield was a member of St. Ann's Catholic Church in San Antonio where she served as Parish Secretary for 31 years. Following retirement she moved to Smithville where she was a member of St. Paul's Catholic Church. Mrs. Canfield was a member of St. Ann's Altar Society, San Antonio; St. Paul's Altar Society, Smithville; Catholic Daughters of the Americas; Court Annunciation No. 1962, La Grange, TX; Friends of the Smithville Library; Art League of Smithville; St. Paul's Bereavement Ministry; the German-Texas Heritage Society and the Catholic Union of Texas, the KJT. Preceded in death by her parents, Gilbert A. Klaus and Ellen Horn Klaus– Trieber, her twin sister, Elaine Louise Smith, brothers, Leo Charles and Gilbert Anthony Klaus and her husband Dwight Joseph Canfield. She is survived by her daughters and their husbands, Sharlene and Nelson Scheler, Evelyn and Jerry Briggs of San Antonio, Jan and Bill Rodwick, Molly and Paul Todd of Smithville, and Mary Kay Shelly of Fort Worth, ten grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

**Submitted by Bill Rodwick, Smithville**



## *In Memoriam*

### **Tetzlaff was distinguished professor**

**Special to the San Angelo Standard-Times**

**Friday, November 14, 2008**

A memorial service celebrating the life of Otto Walter Tetzlaff, distinguished professor of German at Angelo State University, will be held at 2:30 p.m. Dec. 6 in the Houston Harte University Center's CJ Davidson Conference Center, with a reception to follow upstairs.

The 78-year-old native of Pomerania, formerly eastern Germany, died Nov. 4 in Austin surrounded by his beloved wife, Hettie, and his children.

Tetzlaff joined ASU's faculty in 1969 after earning academic degrees at the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Illinois-Champaign/Urbana and Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. When he retired in 1999, the Texas State University regents conferred upon him the extraordinary title of distinguished professor emeritus.

His harrowing childhood during World War II did not prevent him from excelling in school, where he studied Latin, Greek, English, French and German, as well as math, history, philosophy and literature. Even in his later years, he recited poems by Schiller and Goethe, which served to shape his courage, caution and compassion.

Tetzlaff immigrated to the United States in 1954, only to find himself drafted into the U.S. Army and assigned to Bremerhaven, West Germany, where he met Hettie Martha Heinzelmann. They married Nov. 22, 1958, in Rockford, Ill. His death came scarcely two weeks before their golden wedding anniversary.

While at ASU, Tetzlaff received a Minnie Stevens Piper Professorship for outstanding teaching. He served as Texas president of the American Association of Teachers of German. In 1989, he won a Fulbright Fellowship to Berlin. Upon his retirement, Tom Green County commissioners designated Sept. 20, 1999, as "Dr. Otto Tetzlaff Day." While ASU searched for a new department chair four years ago, he came out of retirement in Kingwood to teach and mentor back on the San Angelo campus.

Besides competing in several marathons with the San Angelo Road Lizards, Tetzlaff served on the Tom Green County Library Board and Concho Educators Credit Union board. He was a successful fundraiser for the American Heart Association, a Shriner, a member of Westside Rotary Club and a volunteer with Court Appointed Special Advocates.

His love of teaching and of the German language led Tetzlaff to lead Saturday morning German classes for any elementary students wanting to learn a foreign language. His legacy continues with classes now taught by Christine Muelsch, an ASU language professor whom Tetzlaff recruited from Stanford nearly 20 years ago.

Tetzlaff's survivors include his wife, Hettie, of Kingwood; daughter Christine McFarland and son-in-law Mark McFarland, and their children, Mary Grace and Tyler, all of College Station; daughter Susanne Tetzlaff and son-in-law Eric Tiblier, and their children, Luciana and Emma Carolina, all of Austin; and son Michael Tetzlaff and daughter-in-law Michelle Jennings, and their daughter, Sydney, all of Philadelphia. Tetzlaff was preceded in death by a granddaughter, Erin Susanne McFarland.

To his family and friends, Tetzlaff was larger than life - a beloved husband, father, grandfather, friend, mentor and professor.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to one's charity of choice, or to the Carmelite Monastery, the Salvation Army, or the Otto and Hettie Tetzlaff Scholarship Fund at Angelo State.

**Submitted by Eva Barnett, Austin**

## *In Memoriam*



### **Margaret Starcke Woodruff-Wieding**

A retired professor and a student to the end of her days, Margaret Starcke Woodruff-Wieding died Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2008, from a pulmonary embolism. She was 66. A memorial service is scheduled for 2:00 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 14, at Weed-Corley-Fish, 3125 N. Lamar Blvd. Margaret was born June 9, 1942, in Seguin, Texas. Her parents were Max Starcke, a former mayor of Seguin and general manager of the Lower Colorado River Authority, and Evelyn Quinn. Margaret grew up in Austin and graduated from S.F. Austin High School in 1959. She attended Wellesley College for two years before transferring to the University of Texas at Austin. While a student at UT, she married John W. Woodruff III, also of Austin and also a student, in 1961. A son, John David, was born in 1963; a daughter, Rebecca Lee, in 1966. The marriage ended in divorce in 1971. Margaret completed B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees in German from UT in 1964, 1970, and 1974. From the early 1970s to the mid-1980s, she worked at UT as a German instructor and as a staff member at the Bureau of Business Research and the Linguistics Research Center; she also taught at Austin Community College. At a neighbor's Christmas party in 1981 she met Del Wieding and began a courtship that lasted until her death. They were married in 1986. In 1987 she became an assistant professor at Texas Lutheran College (later Texas Lutheran University) in Seguin, where she taught for more than 10 years. Returning home, she taught once again at Austin Community College and began working toward a second Ph.D., this time in comparative literature, from UT. She completed her coursework and was starting on her dissertation when she died. Margaret is survived by her husband, Del Wieding, and his father, Wilbur, who shared their home, as well as her children and their families, also of Austin: David Woodruff and his wife, Colleen Hobbs, and their daughters Lydia and Grace; and Becky Dyer and her husband, Wayne. She is also survived by John Woodruff, a good friend for more than 50 years. The family asks that people who would like to make gifts in Margaret's memory consider supporting causes dear to their hearts or dear to hers. She was a passionate advocate for social justice and world peace. Margaret was grateful that she was able to spend so much of her life in the company of students, educators, and administrators who were dedicated to the advancement and protection of all kinds of learning. Go in peace. Obituary and guestbook online at [wcfish.com](http://wcfish.com)

*from the Austin-American Statesman 12-11-2008*

**Submitted by Anna Thompson, Dublin**

## President's Notes

Since the last Journal, we have had a successful Weihnachtsmarkt at the German Free School and in San Antonio, and in Brenham, and in Tomball. At the German Free School there were many visitors, new to the GTHS, and of course, many old friends. The total income was down about 10%. Considering how the economic times were affecting everybody, I think we did quite well.



The Society's economics are feeling the current events. The value of our investments is down just as world wide investing is down. Contributions to the 150<sup>th</sup> Club and the Operational fund are slightly lagging. The result is that there will be no expenditures that are not absolutely necessary. While we are in for some tight times, I have no doubt that things will get better and the GTHS will survive.

All of the activity at the German Free School is safety related. New pads for the defibrillator were purchased. The old ones had passed their expiration date. Locks for the under sink cabinets were installed to keep our younger Samstagsschule students out of the cleaning supplies. The toilet in the apartment was cracked and leaking. The City of Austin donated a new low-flush toilet which will be installed next week. Finally, a small fence section was installed in the carport where two ladies fell last year. All of these actions were done by Warren Friedrich.

The Houston Sangerbund underwrote the GTHS Annual Meeting last fall. The economic effect was that the GTHS made a profit from this event instead of just barely breaking even. This is a model that should be continued. If you know of any company, society, or individual that might be an underwriter for our upcoming events, please let me know or contact Eva in the office.

The events now in the pipeline are German Genealogy Seminar in Waco, March 14, Maifest, Saturday, April 25, and the Annual Meeting this fall. Other events are just at the talking stage, such as another Oktoberfest.

We will give scholarships to the top five winners of the Texas State German Contest. Director Mary El-Beheri has run this program with excellent results.

On Feb.15<sup>th</sup> we opened an exhibition at the German Free School on the internment of Germans in Texas during WW II. These events had a great effect on our culture.

If you already have not done so, please pay your 2009 dues. And while you are thinking about it, find a new member.

**Wing**



## Executive Director's Report

### Message from the Executive Director



2009 is off to a busy start! We're reaching out to new members with our German language program; we're involved in several special events; we're doing in-depth strategic planning on the statewide board and Guild board levels, we're in the process of creating a new website; and we're doing our very best to keep true to our mission in these financially challenging times.

My sincere thanks go out to all the volunteers who make this organization thrive! We would not be able to offer most of our programs if we did not have the committed support of so many folks. I encourage new members, as well as those of you who have not participated much recently, to get involved. We're doing many interesting things, and there's something for everyone to do.

Our German language classes are now being held in three locations: Austin, Brenham, and San Antonio. By the fall, we hope to get classes going in the Hill Country and in the Round Rock/Pflugerville area. Special thanks go out to the herculean efforts of our Program Director, Melanie Schmidt-Dumont. She's doing a great job expanding this program. If you have ideas of where we could sponsor more classes, please let her know.

GTHS Advisory Board member Van Massirer has organized a German Genealogy Seminar in the Waco area for Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup>. Several speakers, including our own Genealogy Editor, Liz Hicks, will be sharing detailed information on how to research your German ancestors. I hope you have a chance to attend this special event. You can find out more about it elsewhere in this *Journal*, or by calling the GTHS office. Thanks to Van and the members of his committee for putting this wonderful program together!

In February, we hosted a fascinating exhibit at our headquarters on the internment of German-American civilians here in the US during World War II. Did you know there were eight such camps in Texas alone? This is a little-known chapter of history that is of great significance. In this issue, you'll find an article about one family who experienced internment. We'll have more about this topic and the exhibit at the German Free School in the next *Journal*.

After having several guest editors in 2008, the GTHS *Journal* now has a standing editor, Mary Whigham. Pulling together a comprehensive and engaging *Journal* every three months is no easy task, but Mary's doing a wonderful job. She told me the other day that she's learning more and more about her computer and what it's capable of!

We know we have improvements to make as well. I'm sure you noticed that the Winter issue of the *Journal* arrived quite late in your mailboxes. We had a triple-whammy of circumstances that included delays on submitting our files to the printer, the printer re-structuring their business, and the post office losing a bag of *Journals* – not to mention the general Christmas holiday chaos! We're learning our lessons and are doing our best to ensure you receive your *Journal* in a much more timely fashion. Please accept my apologies for the delay.

I hope each and every one of you enjoys the coming springtime!  
mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Eva Barnett  
GTHS Executive Director

## LEAVE YOUR GERMAN MARK

By Rodney C. Koenig (past President of GTHS)

Roberta Theiss Klein, a life member of German-Texan Heritage Society, died on January 29, 2009, at her home in Klein, Texas. She was born on April 2, 1920, and attained 88 years of age. She was married to Alvin A. Klein for 35 years before his death in 1974. The Klein and Theiss families were pioneer German settlers of the north Houston area. Numerous streets and places bear the Theiss and Klein names. Roberta, who spoke German with me, left surviving her four children, John W. Klein, Sonja Rose Klein, Allan R. Klein and David R. Klein, as well as thirteen grandchildren, eighteen great grandchildren, and sisters Stella Stanford, Thelma Smith and Joyce James.

Roberta was in the first 1937 graduating class of Klein High School. She and her husband, Alvin Klein, along with his brothers, Alex and George, founded Klein Funeral Home, Klein Grocery Store and Klein Feed Store. She was also one of the original shareholders and founders of Klein Bank. Roberta and Alvin also founded a charitable foundation in the 1950s which is continuing to support charitable organizations, with her children as current Trustees. She was instrumental in organizing and supporting Resurrection Lutheran Church in Spring, Texas, and the building of Prince of Peace Church of God in Christ in Hockley, Texas. She was also a founding director of Klein ISD Educational Foundation. She lived on a State of Texas designated Original Historical Heritage Farm which has been owned and operated by the Klein Family since 1854. She is buried in Trinity Cemetery in Klein, Texas. Numerous German Pioneer Settlers, including Adam and Friederika Klein, the original Kleins who came to Texas from Oberndorf, Germany (east of Stuttgart), are buried there with many of the early tombstones having inscriptions in German. A wonderful history of the Klein Family is published under the title "Deep Roots, Strong Branches," which was authored by Dr. Diana Severance, with much help from Roberta, her son John and other Klein Family members. Roberta's son, David R. Klein, spoke to the German-Texan Heritage Society at its annual convention in Houston in August 2008 regarding the Klein Family.

Roberta and I enjoyed visiting in the German language. Various members of her family speak German. Her daughter Sonja can read old German Script. I joined Sonja and David in a tour of the old German tombstones in Trinity Cemetery after Roberta's funeral, as many family members did. Roberta T. Klein truly has left her German Mark through her descendants, through the published book on her family, through her foundation, and through her many charitable works. We will miss her.

How will you leave your German Mark? Consider joining German travel groups to go back to visit Germany, as the Kleins have done by going back to Oberndorf, Germany. Consider researching your ancestors to find the connection to ancestral families that still reside in German or German-speaking areas. Consider publishing a book on your German ancestors as the Klein Family has done. Consider helping the Texas German dialect project at the University of Texas in Austin, which Professor Hans Boas is currently running. Consider leaving a portion of your estate or a percentage of your 401(k), IRA, or life insurance policy to GTHS or some other worthy German-Texan charity. For further information on leaving your German Mark, please call Rodney C. Koenig at (713) 651-5333, or email [meatrkoenig@fulbright.com](mailto:meatrkoenig@fulbright.com).



Photo of Alvin & Roberta Theiss Klein taken May 16, 1939 shortly after their wedding day by Aunt Rosa Klein at a picnic at Hufsmith's Zion Lutheran Church



## **Texas German Dialect Project Developing Educational Materials About Texas- German History For Classroom Use**

Over the past seven years, the Texas German Dialect Project (TGDP) has interviewed more than 300 Texas German speakers and archived the recordings in the Texas German Dialect Archive, accessible over the Internet. While the TGDP continues to interview Texas German speakers across the state, we are now also in the process of developing a series of educational materials for classroom use that will complement the oral history interviews in the on-line archive. Our first project involves the development of a Texas German history website that can be accessed over the Internet. Users will be able to look at a time-line of events relevant to Texas German history and click on a year to read more information about a particular event, such as the founding of Boerne or the Austin Sängerrunde. For each historical event there will be primary source materials (and their English translations) in digital format, such as images, newspaper reports, diary entries, letters, minutes of meetings, etc. Thus, students will be able to click on an event and get access to a wide range of primary source materials to learn more about specific events, people, families, organizations, churches, schools, towns, etc. We plan to use the prototype of this website in the class "The Texas-German Experience" during the fall 2009 semester at UT Austin. After revising the website we plan to develop specific exercises in early 2010 that will help students learn more about Texas German history, culture, and heritage. We will also develop specific exercises for K-12 education. If you have any old pictures (of people, buildings, organizations, etc.), newspapers, letters, diaries, etc. relevant to Texas German history, please contact the TGDP at:

**texasgermandialect@gmail.com or at (512) 279-2462.**

We would like to make copies of your documents, digitize them, and ask you for permission to use them for the Texas German history website.

Hans Boas  
TGDP



**Genealogy Inquiries: Liz Hicks, Genealogy Editor**

If you have information that will assist with the following queries, please respond to the submitter at the address given.

Do **YOU** have a genealogy question? Send it to Liz Hicks, Genealogy Editor, e-mail: [erootrot@usa.net](mailto:erootrot@usa.net) or 746 Edgebrook Dr., Houston, TX 77034-2030. We reserve the right to edit queries. Queries are printed as space permits at no charge.

**GRAU-MEYER-ALEXANDER-BALDWIN-BOTTS**

Betty Cross, 4709 Forest Avenue, Downers Grove, IL 60515, email [FileClerk1@aol.com](mailto:FileClerk1@aol.com)

Do you have anything on Martin Grau, born 1-1-1879 in Austria, resided Trinity, TX, died 5-8-1953 Houston, Texas. I would like to know where he is buried and obtain an obituary for him. Meta Hustedt Meyer born 1883 in Germany was his second wife.

**Reply:** The death certificate for Martin Grau found at <http://pilot.familysearch.org> indicates the funeral was handled by the Heights Funeral Home here in Houston. According to their ledger sheets of Mr. Grau's funeral, he is buried in the Rockland Cemetery, Weldon, TX. You should check [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) for this cemetery to see if there is a photo of his tombstone or of any other Graus buried in this cemetery. Since he resided in Trinity, TX I checked cemeteries for any Grau burials. I found an Ella Allen Grau 1887-1947 buried in the Trinity Cedar Grove Cemetery.

Obit for Martin Grau was found in the Houston Chronicle newspaper Friday, May 8, 1953. Age 74 of Trinity, died 4:45 am at a Houston hospital. Survivors: Wife, Netha (typo?) Grau, Trinity; sons: Carl M. & Willie J. Grau, both of Houston; daughters: Mrs. R.W. Alexander, Mrs. Al Baldwin, Mrs. Otto Botts; nine Grandchildren, one great grandchild all of Houston.

**BECKERMAN(N)-BAECKERMANN-BRUNKEN –BRENNER-GUENTHER**

Ellen Dinges, 300 Clubhouse Dr., Fairhope, AL 36532, email [ellendinges@hotmail.com](mailto:ellendinges@hotmail.com)

All my grandparents came to Texas from Germany. My father was born in Oldenburg, Germany in 1895. I have copy of baptism from the Lutheran Church. His parents were August Beckerman and Anna Margarethe Bunken who settled in Refugio. On the ship's log, August states he has a brother already in Texas. I am searching for August's parents. In the Holy Cross Lutheran Church records in Yoakum, DeWitt County, TX, I found a Diedrich Baeckermann b. 1895 to Diedrich and Anna Brunken, godparents: Carl Baeckerman and Frau (Mrs) C. Baeckermann. Would also like to find information on my mother's family, Henry and Fredericka Guenther who came to Houston circa 1860. Henry was in the construction business in Houston, E.F. Bering Company, and also in Galveston, Texas.

**Reply:** Ellen's original query mentioned Rodenkirchen, Oldenburg, and several other locations in Germany. Ellen seems to have been gathering information on any Beckermann. Golden rule of Genealogy: start with what you know and work back.

A search for information from Texas Death certificates for August, Anna Margarethe, and children indicated a son, Fred Charles Beckerman was born in Runge, TX 8-29-1905 and d.c. gave his social security number. Ellen indicated her Beckerman(n)s settled in Refugio, Refugio County, TX. Since Runge, TX is in Karnes County, a search of records of both counties is suggested for other Beckerman(n)s and records that may determine relationships. F.C.'s social security application will give →

the names and place of birth of his parents (August and Anna Margarethe).

Index to Texas Declaration of Intent and Naturalizations 1846-1900: Karnes County: August G. Backermann age 35, b. Germany, age given when filed Declar. Jan. 20, 1905. Also, Carl Backermann, age 32 as of Oct. 26, 1896 when filed Declar. in Co.Court Cuero, DeWitt County, filed for nat. in Karnes Co. Sept. 26, 1901. DeWitt County: Carl Backermann (Beckermann) above is listed and a Diedrich Backermann age 42, b. Germany, as of June 7, 1892 when he filed. These census, deeds and probate records may help determine relationships Ellen found in church records. I would do a thorough search of church records of the baptisms of children of all Backermann/Beckermann's listed above. These may give place of birth of their parents in Germany. It does not appear that the Rodenkirchen Lutheran Church records have been filmed by LDS (Mormans), making it necessary to contact the individual registration offices in Germany. Rodenkirchen is located in the Amtsgericht Brake. The Lutheran Church Archives address is: EV.-Luth. Kirche in Oldenburg, Philosophenweg 1, 26121 Oldenburg, e-mail: [ips@ev-kirche-oldenburg.de](mailto:ips@ev-kirche-oldenburg.de). Possibly, Ellen can find the baptismal record for August Beckermann by writing to this archive. Strueckhausen is also located in the Brake Amtsgericht. Check civil registration in Oldenburg which began in 1876. The office for towns can be identified in *Meyers Orts und Verkehrs-Lexikon des Deutschen Reichs*. There may be town lineage books known as an ortssippenbuch or dorfsippenbuch available. Try LDS FHL film #678491.

A search of Fogel-West Funeral Home records (originals at Clayton Library) for the funerals of August and Anna Margarethe gave the following information. Margaret Beckerman had been living in Houston for 26 yrs. when she died 3-18-1948. Surviving relatives: sons, Alvin and F.C., Houston; Charles, Las Vegas, NV; Arthur H., Wichita Falls; daughters, Mrs. Helen McDermott, Houston; and Mrs. Mary Schaffner, San Antonio, TX. 15 grandchildren, 6 g. grandchildren, buried Rosewood Cemetery. Pallbearers: Frank Parker, Gerald McDermott, Geo. William McDermott, Arthur Rosamond, Bill Wyman, Hobson Gray. Minister, Rev. J.H. Freeland, music by F.W. Singers.

Hopefully, I'll have some information on Henry and Fredericka Guenther for inclusion in a future Journal.

END

## 2008 Operational Fund Donors

*The German-Texan Heritage Society is very fortunate to have supporters like you! Your continued tax-deductible financial contributions, including matching funds from your employer, are vital to the well-being of our Society.*

*The 2008 GTHS Operational Fund Drive began on January 1, 2008 and ended on December 31, 2008. We raised \$18,025.00 from 175 donors.*

*All donations received during 2009 will be listed in the Spring 2010 Journal*

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of Elsie Trenckmann (my German Teacher)  
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Rebecca L Hegar, Arlington  
Carolyn Meiners Heinsohn, La Grange  
Herbert C Hertel, McLean, Vir.  
David & Elizabeth Nitschke Hicks, Houston -  
In Memory of Karin Hicks van Hovenberg  
Charles M Hornberger, San Antonio  
Donna A Kalteyer, Scarbro, W.V. - In  
Memory of Donald Pressler Kalteyer

Kenn Knopp, Fredericksburg  
Lorchen Freier Koehn, Port Lavaca  
Hilmer H Krebs, Springfield, Vir.  
Diane Petri Lewis, Helotes  
Michael A & Angelika Mattern, Houston  
Virgil D & Wanda Spfeifer, Corpus Christi  
Laura Massirer Scott, Gatesville  
Lore A Senseney, San Antonio  
Marilyn Smith, Denton  
Philip Lawrence Sterzing, Austin  
Robert E Tieman, Austin  
Georgia Tubbs, Round Top  
Vicki Ehlers Watts, Georgetown  
Douglas & Paula White, Katy  
Marshal R Wilke, Dallas  
Agnes Koehler Wilkinson, Austin  
Jeannette M Pfeil Wright, Schertz  
Jodie A Zoeller, Plano

### Other Gifts

Georgia Voges Braulick, Northfield, Minn.  
Ingrid Brock, Corpus Christi  
Linda Carol BahnerDuncan, Beaumont  
James George, Austin  
James O Hambrick, Round Rock  
Jean & Claus Heide, San Antonio - In Memory  
of Dorothes Geier  
Susan Kenzle, Austin  
Quin D. Kroll, Brenham  
Dennis D Masar, Scotch Plains, N.J.  
William A McMahon Jr, San Antonio  
Hans Micklitz, San Antonio

Diane H & Horace A Mitchell, Lubbock  
Joachim Modlich, Houston  
Nellie Kinkler Moses, San Antonio  
Marcia Neuhaus, Tow  
Mary Jean Neuse, Gonzales  
Mary Ordner, New Ulm  
John P & Eleanor Schneider, Austin  
Jerald Vecker, Ingleside  
Hans & Rohani Weger, Austin  
James & Sophie Werchan, Austin  
Harrison Gray & Brenda G Westmoreland, Yoakum  
Bill P. Williams

## 150<sup>th</sup> Club Update

*Our goal for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Club is to raise \$150,000, to be split evenly between the Statewide Outreach Program, an Operating Endowment, and German Free School Renovations. By the end of 2008, we had pledges totalling \$82,487.76. You can help us reach our goal by joining the 150<sup>th</sup> Club today! Please see form on next page (p. 15).*

*A complete list of 150<sup>th</sup> donors was printed in the Winter 2008 Journal. Since that time, we've had two new members join this three year campaign:*

*Jim & Gerri Gehman West - Silver Sponsors  
Ferdyné K. (Dena) Rittmann - Pewter Sponsor*

## In-Kind Donations & Volunteers

*Each year, we receive many in-kind donations of books, equipment, food, crafts and supplies, along with thousands of hours of helpful and friendly volunteer labor. These vital donations assist us greatly in so many ways: we save on expenses by having equipment and supplies donated rather than purchasing them; we raise funds for the Library by selling some of our donated books; we raise funds at events by selling donated food and crafts; we save on contract labor costs by having skilled volunteers do repairs on the building, fix our computers, manage our website, upgrade our database, organize our celebrations, beautify our garden and much, much more.*

*Volunteers publish our Journal and the Schulhaus Reporter. Our office volunteers help the staff keep up with all the administrative work. Volunteers run the Annual Meeting, Maifest, Oktoberfest and the Christmas Market. They manage our library, our speaker series, our weekly Open House & Stammtisch and our potlucks. They represent GTHS at functions across the state. Our GTHS Board, Advisory Board and German Free School Guild Board consist of volunteers who give their time and expertise to set a course for this fine organization. We are extremely grateful to each and every one of you for your participation in the Society and your dedication to our mission. Thank You!*

**150th Club      Funds to be used for:**

- Fund the development of outreach programs beyond the Austin area. \$50,000  
*Genealogy seminars, German language classes sponsored/conducted by GTHS*  
*Annual Scholarships to three deserving individuals*
- Begin the funding of an operating endowment for the German-Texan Heritage Society \$50,000
- Fund needed renovations/upgrades to the German Free School building and grounds \$50,000  
 (all necessary done—all others on Hold due to the sagging economy )

**Levels of Giving:**

- Platinum Sponsor:      \$5,000/year for 3 years, total \$15,000\*
- Gold Sponsor:            \$1,500/year for 3 years, total \$4,500\*
- Silver Sponsor:          \$500/year for 3 years, total \$1,500\*
- Bronze Sponsor:        \$150/year for 3 years, total \$450
- Pewter Sponsor:        \$50/year for 3 years, total \$150

You will be a Charter member of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Club, Mention in *The Journal*  
\*At these funding levels, name included in plaque to be hung at the German Free School

**Yes, I wish to become a member of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Club!**

Donor Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_, my first installment of three. I will be contacted annually for the balance. Make check payable to GTHS, PO Box 684171, Austin, 78768.

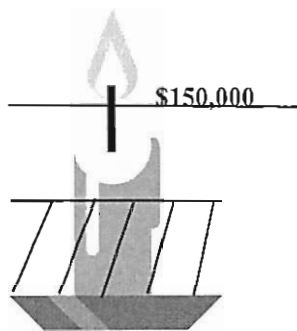
I wish my donation to be in memory/honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Please send acknowledgement to \_\_\_\_\_

I am a descendant of a German Free School student, teacher, trustee \_\_\_\_ (place check here) Name of GFS Ancestor(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Donations to GTHS are tax deductible under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.  
GTHS has not provided any goods or services for these donations.

*Pledges continue to come in—we have raised over 57% of our goal of \$150,000. A great way to leave your German Mark!!*



Picture your name or your ancestor's name on this bronze plaque to be displayed on the German Free School Building



## 2008 Memorials, Individual Gifts & Event Underwriters

### Memorials

- John & Brenda Ahrens, Round Mountain - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Joan R Andersen, Austin - In Honor & Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Holly H Coerver, Dallas - In Memory of Walter W. Kalteyer Jr.*  
*Elizabeth Helene Wupperman Dirwiddie, Baytown - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Margaret Bickler Duncan, Falmouth, Maine - In Loving Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Jane Frost, Austin - In Memory of Richard A. Schenck*  
*Joan B Frost, Austin - In Memory of Richard A. Schenck*  
*Sandy Gravenor, Dripping Springs - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*The Krause Family, Buda - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Mr & Mrs Meyer - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Rodney G & Eleanor M Montfort, Austin - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Michael A. Murphy, Dripping Springs - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Marcus & Susan Murphy, Spicewood - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Sue D Onstott, Boerne - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Fred & Janet Owen, Austin - In Memory of Richard Schenck*  
*Dickie P Pattillo, Volente - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Gina & Paul Ronhaar, Marble Falls - In Memory of Richard A. Schenck*  
*Stephen B Secord, Austin - In Memory of Richard A. Schenck*  
*Constance & Christian Seger, Houston - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Denise Stiff, Nashville, Tenn. - In Memory of Richard Schenck*  
*Dan Ernest & Joy M Ulrich, Burnet - In Memory of Richard A Schenck*  
*Charles E & Caroline von Rosenberg, Rock Hill, S.C. - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Herman Eugene von Rosenberg, Baytown - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Hans & Helga von Schweinitz, Pflugerville- In Memory of Pearl Bethune*  
*Hans & Helga von Schweinitz, Pflugerville - In Memory of Dick Schenck*  
*Janet Winer, Waban, Mass. - In Memory of Richard Schenck*  
*Wayne & Jeanie Youngblood, Austin - In Memory of Dick Schenck*

### Individual Gifts

*Marilyn Bindseil, Austin*

*Daniel Bode, Dayton*

*Teddy Boehm, Brenham - for the Library fund*

*Teddy Boehm, Brenham - for the Scholarship fund*

*James M & Johanna Damon, Austin - for the "Vanished" Internment Exhibit*

*Mary M El-Beheri, San Antonio*

*Mary M El-Beheri, San Antonio - for the Scholarship fund*

*Ewing K & Barbara Evans - Austin*

*John H Kothmann, Fredericksburg*

*Hilmer H Krebs, Springfield, Vir. - In Memory of Walter Adolph Krebs,  
for the Scholarship fund*

*Leonard C & Lou Ella S Larson, Port Arthur - for the Scholarship fund*

*Charles & Beverly Locklin Jr - Austin*

*Carl Albert Luckenbach, Spring*

*F Murphy & Joyce S Nelson, Austin*

*Marcia Neuhaus, Tow*

*Judith L Piscitelli, East Norwich, N.Y.*

*Carl W Schumacher Jr, Houston - In Memory of Anna Bering Schumacher*

*Marjorie T von Rosenberg, Georgetown - In Memory of Dr. Dale U von Rosenberg, for the  
Library fund*

*Jean & Bob Warneke, Austin*

*Jim & Gerri Gehman West, Austin*

*Harrison Gray & Brenda G Westmoreland, Yoakum - for the Scholarship fund*

*Harrison Gray & Brenda G Westmoreland, Yoakum - for the Library fund*

*Mary & Larry Whigham, Washington*

*Bette Williams, Austin - for the Scholarship fund*

*Bette Williams, Austin - for the Library fund*

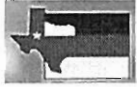
### Event Underwriters

*Wing & Barbara Evans, Austin - Maifest*

*Houston Saengerbund, Houston - 2008 Annual Meeting Sponsor*

*If we have inadvertently omitted your name, please accept our apologies and let us know so we can correct the error in a future edition of the Journal.*

Newsletter of the Texas German Dialect Project (TGDP)



# THE TEXAS GERMAN TIMES

DECEMBER 2008

ISSUE 2

## TGDP developing educational materials about Texas German history for classroom use



Over the past seven years, the Texas German Dialect Project (TGDP) has interviewed more than 300 Texas German speakers and archived the recordings in the Texas German Dialect Archive, accessible over the Internet. While the TGDP continues to interview Texas German speakers across the state, we are now also in the process of developing a series of educational materials for classroom use that will complement the oral history interviews in

the online archive. Our first project involves the development of a Texas German history website that can be accessed over the Internet. Users will be able to look at a timeline of events relevant to Texas German history and click on a year to read more information about a particular event, such as the founding of Boerne or the Austin Sängerrunde. For each historical event there will be primary source materials (and their English transla-

tions in digital format, such as images, newspaper reports, diary entries, letters, minutes of meetings, etc. Thus, students will be able to click on an event and get access to a wide range of primary source materials to learn more about specific events, people, families, organizations, churches, schools, towns, etc. We plan to use the prototype of this website in the class "The Texas-German Experience" during the fall 2009 semester at UT Austin. After revising the website we plan to develop specific exercises in early 2010 that will help students learn more about Texas German history, culture, and heritage. We will also develop specific exercises for K-12 education. If you have any old pictures (of people, buildings, organizations, etc.), newspapers, letters, diaries, etc. relevant to

Texas German history, please contact the TGDP at [texasgerman-dialect@gmail.com](mailto:texasgerman-dialect@gmail.com) or at (512) 279-2462. We would like to make copies of your documents, digitize them, and ask you for permission to use them for the Texas German history website.

### TGDP MILESTONES 2008

- ◆ In April 2008, Texas German and the TGDP were featured in *DER SPIEGEL*, the most prominent news magazine in Germany.
- ◆ In 2008, members of the TGDP presented fourteen lectures on Texas German at national and international conferences.
- ◆ During 2008, the Texas German Endowment received more than \$7,000 in donations. See inside for more details about the endowment.

### *Featured Texas German Speaker: Jeanette Felger*

Jeanette Felger is proud of her German heritage. At 57 years old, her great-grandfather Stefan Klein was the most senior of the original 200 immigrants to come to Comal Springs (now New Braunfels) with the *Adelsverein*, along with his wife and five of their ten children. Expecting to be given horses upon arrival, they instead found themselves with no other choice but to walk most of the 150 miles up the Guadalupe River. Miraculously, all 200 of the original immigrants survived the grueling journey and built their houses in present-day Comal County. Jeanette says that

stories from her ancestors and the closely-knit community of hard-working, loyal people they established in New Braunfels are central to what it means to her to be a Texas German.

Jeanette has been a teacher since the superintendent of schools asked her parents to have her stop attending college during World War II to assume the instruction of fourth, fifth and sixth graders whose teacher had just passed away.

*(Continued on p. 4)*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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Page 2

ISSUE 2

*Another full day of interviews devoted to preserving Texas German heritage and culture*



**Adolph Bernhard Jr., Ashley Ritter, Florence Kerry, Guido Halder, Kitty and Robert Hunter, Hans Boas, Karen Roesch, and Charlette Delke.**

On November 20th, 2008, four members of the Texas German Dialect Project (TGDP) conducted a full day of interviews at the ranch of Robert and Kitty Hunter south of Fredericksburg. After a two hour drive from Austin, Hans Boas, Guido Halder, Ashley Ritter, and Karen Roesch



**Hans interviews Donald Eckhardt.**

arrived at 10 a.m. and set up their recording equipment in different rooms of the Hunters' house. The interviews began promptly at 10:30 a.m., with each of the TGDP members interviewing a Texas German speaker one-on-one for about two and a half hours – with short breaks in between.

After signing consent forms allowing TGDP members to record and archive the interviews, the Texas German speakers participated in three different types of interviews.

The first interview was an oral history interview during which Texas German speakers were asked questions about various topics, such as where their ancestors came from and how they got to Texas, what it was like growing up in the Hill Country in the old days, ranching and farming practices, the history of the area, recipes, songs, etc. These oral history interviews are especially valuable because they capture the unique Texas German history, culture, and heritage through the eyes of Texas German speakers themselves. By listening to these interviews, future generations will be able to understand and appreciate the many contributions made by German immigrants and their descendants to Texas. The second interview consisted of a list of English words such as "milk," "head" or "hairbrush," phrases such as "two cows" or "the red ants that sting," and sentences such as "Hang the picture over the bed" or "He takes the most sausage" that were translated into Texas German. The goal of this translation task is to compare how different Texas German speakers across the state pronounce the same words, phrases, and sentences. These data will help us understand how Texas German has developed over the past 150 years in different areas across the Lone Star State. The third interview is a biographical questionnaire that seeks to capture language

use and language attitudes. For example, by asking how much English and German was spoken to different people throughout their lives we are able to develop a detailed account of how the use of Texas German has changed over the past 75 years. One of the findings so far has been that the use of Texas German has drastically declined in public places such as stores, schools, and churches, while it has remained somewhat stable within families, in particular between spouses and siblings. Regarding language attitudes, Texas German speakers are asked whether they would like to see Texas German be preserved, taught in the schools, featured on the radio and TV, etc. Another set of questions asks speakers how strongly they identify with Texas German culture and whether they are proud of it.

After completing the first set of interviews we took a lunch break. Our wonderful hosts provided us with tasty sausage, scrumptious Kochkäse and bread, different cakes, snacks, and a selection of delicious beverages. We enjoyed the beautiful view of the Hill Country from the Hunters' huge porch and discussed how the area had changed over the past few decades. Then, we started the second round of interviews, which ended around 4 p.m. Derek Hunter, Kitty and Robert's son, observed the interviews throughout the day and took video footage of the interviews for a

documentary film on Texas German history and culture. After completing the second round of interviews, we packed our equipment up,



**Charlette Delke and Guido enjoy a glass of wine after their interview.**

thanked our hosts for their cordial hospitality and the Texas German speakers for their time and willingness to participate in the interviews, and drove back to Austin around 4:30 p.m.

This day turned out to be particularly successful because we were able to interview seven speakers of Texas German, totaling more than 4 hours of interviews that will be edited and then archived in the Texas German Dialect Archive (see <http://tgdp.org/archive.php>). As of November 2008, the TGDP has interviewed more than 300 speakers of Texas German and archived these interviews for future generations as a monument to the history, culture, and heritage of the German immigrants and their descendants in Texas.

**View from the Hunters' house.**





## Frequently Asked Questions about the Texas German Dialect Project

### What kinds of questions do interviewers ask?

Interviewers try to ask questions that will produce casual, relaxed German conversation. This usually involves questions about topics ranging from childhood games to current activities. Since our major focus is on what people are interested in as they talk, we focus on getting people to talk about their favorite topics.

### Why do they need to tape record the interview?

The interviewers are interested in many aspects of the community's language, not just in hearing one or two unusual pronunciations or a new word. We can't listen for all the different features we're interested in all at once -- and pay attention to what's being said -- without making a tape that we can go back and listen to as many times as we need to.

### What exactly do the interviewers do with the interview?

We go through each interview in order to describe exactly how different structures pattern. We also compare different language items across different groups of speakers within a community.

For example, we may look at how a particular type of sentence structure or even a single vowel is produced by older people, middle-aged people, and younger people to see how the language is changing over time.

### Who listens to the interview?

Before editing, only authorized TGDP members. Taped interviews are given coded labels and stored in a locked office to protect the privacy of each interviewee. When parts of interviews are used for educational purposes such as academic conferences, class presentations, or for presentation over the Internet for wider accessibility, the privacy of interviewees is guaranteed.

### What good does the interview do for the community?

We are very concerned with sharing the knowledge that we get from communities with them. In fact, a critical part of our project involves working with communities to celebrate their language traditions. We do this in several ways. For

example, we will write a popular account of the Texas German dialect that can be used in historical preservation efforts. We will share this with local schools, preservation societies, and museums that are concerned with preserving cultural heritage through language. Furthermore, we will put together an archival tape collection of selected descriptions, narratives, and oral histories for these institutions. And with the Texas German Dialect Archive, we have set up a central location within Texas where these kinds of materials can be preserved for future generations.



Erin Covert interviewing Jeanette Schneider at her home in Fredericksburg.

## A note from Dr. Stephen Sokolyk (N. Braunfels): Why I give to the Texas German Endowment



Historical marker in New Braunfels.

I do have German-Texan heritage—it reaches all the way back to 1952. I speak German, and though it's not always "Hochdeutsch," it doesn't have a lot in common with Texas German. So why am I an enthusiastic supporter of the Texas German Dialect Project?

First of all, this is a unique dialect that I heard around me as I was growing up, and I still hear from a few of my patients in the Seguin area. Most of those patients will tell you that Texas German is "bad German," that they are "Deutschverderber" (ruiners of German). But the hard work of Prof. Hans Boas and others has refuted the notion that Texas German is simply low-quality, and has called attention instead to its equal status with other German varieties all over the world. I want Texas German to be studied on a sci-

entific level, to redeem its status as a functioning language.

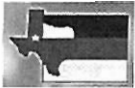
More significantly, however, German immigrants played a vital role in the development of Texas, and a great many of these people lived their entire lives in communities where German was the primary language. Texas German, then, was the voice of key contributors to our common Texas heritage, including scientists like Lindheimer, educators and publishers like Seele, merchants like Roegelein and Guenther, and also the ancestors of hundreds of thousands of Texans.

This language is like a treasured keepsake in the family, about whose history we always want to learn more.

Texas German, like many languages and dialects the world over, is fading away, no longer passed on to the younger generations. We cannot keep it in use, but it is part of our shared cultural history, and as such I believe there is great value in studying it, and acquainting future Texans with its hidden riches. I hope you agree.

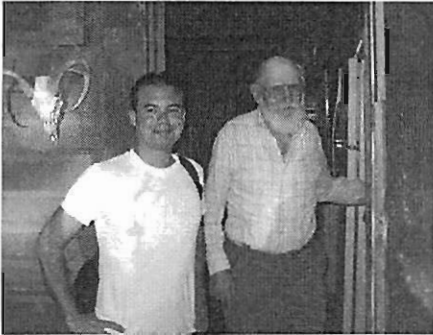
*Many thanks to Dr. Stephen Sokolyk for his generous support of the Texas German Endowment.*





Page 4

**Graduate Student completes Master's degree in Germanic Linguistics**



Hunter Weilbacher leaving an interview with speaker Robert Schuhmann.

Hunter Weilbacher, former TGDP graduate student research assistant, completed his M.A. thesis in May 2008 on the use and functions of the English discourse marker "anyway" in

Texas German.

Using interview data from the on-line Texas German Dialect Archive (TGDA), Hunter analyzed the different contexts in which Texas German speakers use "anyway." Besides many other interesting results, Hunter found that "anyway" in Texas German is used almost exactly as it is in Texas English, which is due to the word being borrowed from Texas English. As such, the use of "anyway" in Texas German reflects a partial assimilation of Texas German language and culture to its Texas English surroundings. Hunter is now a doctoral student in the Department of Germanic Studies at UT Austin. During the academic year 2008-2009, Hunter is a visiting student at the Freie Universitaet Berlin, where he is taking graduate seminars on Germanic linguistics in preparation for his doctoral work. He will resume his studies at UT Austin in August 2009.

**ISSUE 2**



Jeanette pointing out the bluebonnets she embroidered on a handmade quilt in the Sphlenburg Museum. Four quilts of its kind were made to celebrate the 150 year anniversary of the founding of New Braunfels.

**Continued from p. 1: Featured Speaker**

In order to teach, she had to pass a simple teaching certification test, which she was determined to fail so that she could stay in college. But in the car on the way to the test, her father told her in strong, perfect German, "Jeanette, do not fail this test and shame our family. You must do your patriotic duty." She is glad that she heeded his advice.

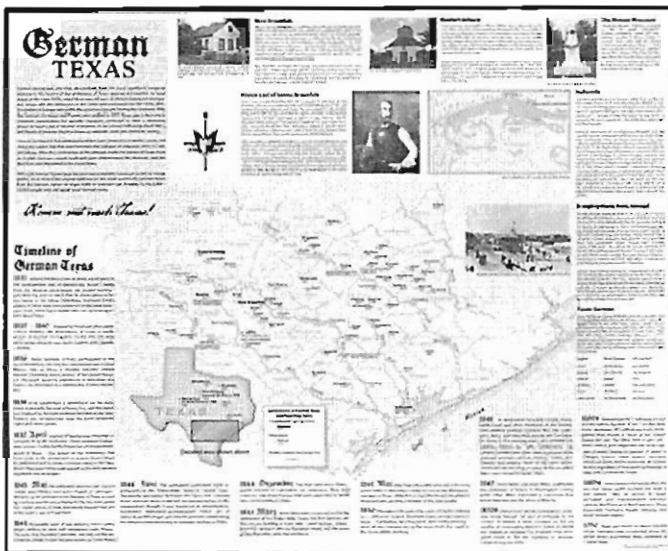
Jeanette now lives in the house she was born in, just across from Prince Solms Park in New Braunfels. Her family runs an inner tube rental in the summers, and she stays busy with her obligations to the Daughters of the American Revolution, New Braunfels Garden Club, Beta Sigma Phi and memberships to other organizations. She also enjoys needlepoint, sewing and other crafts. In February, she will be giving a talk for the Conservation Society of New Braunfels, telling the stories of her ancestors since their immigration to Texas with artifacts from each generation, at the Forke Store on Conservation Plaza.

**Featured: Texas German Map**

Show your Texas German pride and contribute to the Texas German Endowment at the University of Texas at Austin by purchasing one of our high-quality prints of the history of German immigration into Texas!

Donated for fundraising purposes by mapmaker and German American Justin Cozart, this gorgeous 34"x28" map includes a chronology of the history of Texas Germans dating back to 1831, when Johann Friedrich Ernst first fell in love with the wide-open country and wrote a book about it, *Reise nach Texas*. It also explains key concepts in German immigration, such as the role of the *Adelsverein*, an organization that was instrumental in the settling of Texas, the founding of famous cities, basic differences between Texas and Standard German, the popularity of German music, and more.

Contact the TGDP for yours today! See back page for info.)



German Texas map, available exclusively from the TGDP for \$40.00 including shipping and handling. See included order form for details.



## Support the Texas German Endowment at the University of Texas at Austin: Purchase a Texas German Map!

The Texas German Dialect Project (TGDP) is proud to offer a beautiful 34x28" map of German Texas for purchase (see reverse for image). Surrounding the map of Central Texas are several paragraphs about important Texas German people, places and events, and an extensive timeline of German Texas from 1844 to 1900. The maps cost \$40.00 each, including shipping in a 36" cardboard tube mailer via USPS.

*Please fill out this order form completely and return with payment to:*

Department of Germanic Studies  
1 University Station C3300  
Burdine 336  
The University of Texas at Austin  
Austin, TX 78712

**All proceeds from this map benefit the Texas German Endowment. Delivery will take 2-3 weeks.**

**Billing information**

Name (Last, First) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Would you like to include a donation amount of your choice with your purchase?**

(Donations are tax-deductible.)

**Yes!** I have added an extra donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  **No**

Number of maps \_\_\_\_\_ Total amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Form of payment:**

**Check** enclosed made payable to *University of Texas at Austin*. Please write "Texas German Endowment" in the memo line.

**Credit Card:**

Visa  MasterCard  Discover  American Express

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

**Shipping address:**  Same as above  Alternate address - indicated below

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature x \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Further questions? Contact the TGDP at (512) 279 2462.



Actual size is 34" wide by 28" tall.

## German TEXAS

German immigrants and their descendants have been instrumental in the development of Texas since the early 1840s. This timeline highlights key events from the early 1830s, when Texas was still part of Mexico, through the 1850s, when German immigrants began to settle in Texas. It covers the period from the early 1830s to the 1850s, highlighting key events in German-Texas history.

**1831** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

**1832** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

**1833** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

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**1840** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

**1841** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

**1842** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

**1843** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

**1844** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

**1845** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

**1846** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

**1847** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

**1848** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

**1849** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

**1850** The first German immigrants arrived in Texas, settling in the area around Austin. They were followed by other German immigrants, including those from the Rhine region.

Detailed area shown above

### Komm mit nach Texas!

## Timeline of German Texas

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### New Braunfels

Established in 1845, New Braunfels was one of the first German settlements in Texas. It was founded by Frederic W. Augustus, a German immigrant who had previously lived in Germany. The town was named in honor of the German Emperor, Nicholas I.

### Fredericksburg

Established in 1846, Fredericksburg was another early German settlement in Texas. It was founded by a group of German immigrants who had previously lived in Germany. The town was named in honor of the German Emperor, Nicholas I.

### The Flowers Mosaic

The Flowers Mosaic is a historical artifact that depicts a scene from the early days of German settlement in Texas. It shows a group of people gathered around a table, possibly engaged in a social activity or a business transaction. The mosaic is made of small tiles and is a valuable historical record.

### Pines Cliff of Solms-Braunfels

Pines Cliff is a historical site located in the Pines Cliff area of Texas. It was a settlement established by German immigrants in the mid-19th century. The site is now a state historical park and is a popular destination for visitors interested in German-Texas history.

### Indians

The relationship between German immigrants and Native Americans in Texas was complex. While some German immigrants had positive interactions with Native Americans, others had more negative experiences. The timeline highlights key events in this relationship.

### Bringing Music from Abroad

German immigrants brought their musical traditions with them to Texas. This included instruments like the accordion and the violin, as well as musical styles like waltzes and polkas. The timeline highlights key events in the history of music in German-Texas.

### 1835

1835 was a significant year in German-Texas history. It saw the arrival of the first German immigrants in Texas, as well as the establishment of the first German settlement in Texas. The timeline highlights key events in 1835.

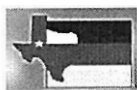
### 1840

1840 was a significant year in German-Texas history. It saw the arrival of more German immigrants in Texas, as well as the establishment of more German settlements in Texas. The timeline highlights key events in 1840.

### 1845

1845 was a significant year in German-Texas history. It saw the arrival of more German immigrants in Texas, as well as the establishment of more German settlements in Texas. The timeline highlights key events in 1845.

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ISSUE 2

### TGDP Featured Member of 2008: Erin Covert



Erin graduated from UT in May 2008.

Erin Covert joined the TGDP as an undergraduate research assistant in September 2007. Though she graduated with Special Honors from the UT Department of Germanic

Studies in May, she plans to hold on to her position with the TGDP at least until March 2009, when she goes to Berlin for six months to take part in the International Parliamentary Scholarship program, which includes an internship as an assistant in the office of a representative from the German Bundestag and free courses at the Humboldt University. She hopes this internship will help her gain political experience before she enters law school in the fall, preferably at UT. Her lifelong

goal is to work in the U.S. judiciary or legislature. In addition to her part-time work at the TGDP, Erin has been directing a documentary film on the Wegner Ranch at San Marcos in an effort to preserve the family's many memories and stories, and to

help them obtain a historical marker for the ranch's 100th anniversary next September. Between these two jobs, she has gained a wealth of knowledge about life in Texas, past and present.

#### OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE

Are you a Texas German Speaker? Do you know anyone who speaks Texas German? Contact us to set up an interview!

Texas German Dialect Project  
Department of Germanic Studies  
1 University Station, C3300, Burdine 336  
University of Texas at Austin  
Austin, TX 78712

(512) 279-2462 / [texasgermandialect@gmail.com](mailto:texasgermandialect@gmail.com)

### New TGDP Members in 2008

Ashley Ritter is a first year graduate student at UT-Austin. She was awarded a student research mentoring fellowship, and is very happy to be working with Hans Boas. She comes from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and is enjoying all of the new experiences Texas has to offer. Ashley received her undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, where she majored in German and Spanish. She also had the opportunity to explore the topic of German immigration to Wisconsin. Her work included a two year research project, in which she transcribed the diary of an 1850s immigrant to Wisconsin. Ashley was intrigued by the different language of the time period, as well as the cultural implications of being "German in America". This year, Ashley is starting her master's degree in Germanic Studies with a focus on

linguistics, and she is especially interested in Texas German phonology and morphology. In the future, she hopes to incorporate her work with the Texas German Dialect project into her master's thesis.

Luke Lindemann started learning German as a child from his Texas German speaking grandfather, Gus Lindemann of La Grange. He later became interested in linguistics at Pomona College in California, traveled to Germany with a study grant to research dialects there, and then attended a talk that Hans Boas gave in Austin. He volunteered for the TGDP for several weeks this summer interviewing speakers and editing audio files. He says that he most enjoyed "working with the staff and driving around Texas, having fascinating conversations and recording speech." Luke intends to return to help the TGDP again next

summer.

Raphael Feider

came all

the way

from Jena,

Germany

to intern

with the

TGDP for

6 weeks. A

native of

Trier,

Germany,

he moved to

Jena to

study Eng-

lish/American

Studies and

History at the

Friedrich-

Schiller-University.

As a general

requirement of his stud-

ies he needed to complete an

internship, and he decided

that working with the TGDP

was "the most interesting

opportunity possible." Dur-

ing his time with the TGDP,

Raphael conducted and ed-



Raphael Feider and Ashley Ritter with Dorthy and Hans Hannemann of Fredericksburg, the first speakers they interviewed.

linguistic data. Besides his

daily duties, Raphael explored Texas. He was particularly charmed by Fredericksburg, saying, "It's amazing that there is a town in Texas that first reminds me of the wild west, but has German names and flags everywhere." Raphael returned to Germany six weeks later with fresh memories, American friends and a new idea of what Texas is really like.



**TEXAS GERMAN DIALECT PROJECT (TGDP)**

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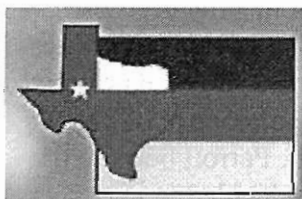
AS REPORTED BY

**NPR**

AND

ASSOCIATED PRESS

*Ways to give: How to contribute to the Texas German Dialect Endowment*



**Plans for 2009**

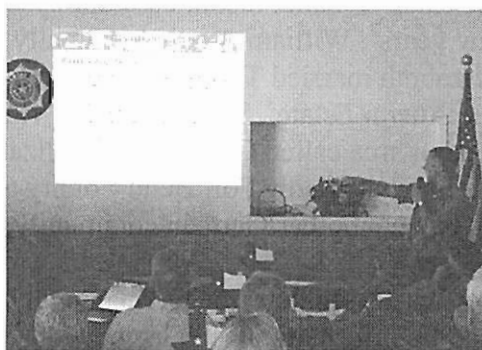
- The TGDP will test the first version of the Texas German history website and use it in an undergraduate class "The Texas-German Experience" at UT Austin.
- TGDP members will continue interviewing Texas German speakers throughout the state. We plan on extending our fieldwork sites to the area between Giddings and Brenham.
- Members of the TGDP will continue their fund raising efforts for the Texas German Endowment at UT.

Since 2001, the TGDP has conducted interviews with more than 300 speakers of Texas German throughout the Lone Star State, totaling more than 650 hours of recordings.

However, the project currently has a list of over 300 Texas Germans waiting to be interviewed. Because many of the current and potential Texas German informants are in their 80s and 90s, this means that valuable interviews could be lost in case they passed away before they are interviewed. The process of adding entries to the Dialect Archive is extremely time intensive. Per hour of interview added to the archive, an estimated 50 hours of work are necessary for setting up the interview, traveling to the interview site, recording the interview, and then digitizing, editing, analyzing, transcribing, translating, and archiving the interview material.

During the past six years the project has received funding from various sources both inside and outside the University, totaling \$200,000 so far. After years of funding by

Hans Boas presents a lecture on Texas German at the Fredericksburg Rotary Club.



different sources, the TGDP has been unable to receive further external grants for the past two years, drastically reducing the TGDP's ability to record and archive interviews.

To maintain its operations, the TGDP requires an estimated budget of about \$50,000 annually. Since both state and federal funding agencies have cut down funding for the humanities over the past four years, the TGDP has not been able to secure funding from these sources. In the summer of 2010, the project will reach an interruption in recording and processing interviews. For these reasons the sole option to guarantee continuity of the TGDP lies in the establishment of a Texas German Endowment

to ensure its permanent maintenance.

The Texas German Dialect Endowment is seeking donations from individuals, businesses, and organizations. The tax-deductible donations are deposited into an account at The University of Texas at Austin which generates interest each year. This interest will support the recordings and research activities of the TGDP for the next 30-40 years. After that, the interest generated by the endowment will be used for scholarships for students who are interested in researching Texas German culture, history, and language at the university. All donations are tax-deductible. Those who wish to contribute to the endowment can make checks out to "Texas German Dialect Endowment—UT Austin" and send them to Hans Boas, and receipts will be sent out within two weeks. If you are interested in making a donation to the endowment or have questions about the endowment, please contact Dr. Boas at (512) 279-2462.

# Community Events

## The Immigrant Communities of White Oak Bayou and Germantown in Harris County

by Omar Holguin, Jr. and Ginger Daily

This paper concerns the 19<sup>th</sup> century immigrants from Germany, who settled both in an area north of White Oak Bayou near its confluence with Little White Oak Bayou and in a separate area known as Germantown. Both communities were once located beyond Houston's city limits, but today both areas are located within the City of Houston.

The community of Germantown lay northwest of Houston, beyond White Oak and Buffalo Bayous, and comprised the northeast quarter of the John Austin Grant<sup>1</sup>. In 1824 John Austin received a land grant from the Mexican Government for two leagues of land; and when John died, his wife, Elizabeth, and his brother, William Tenant Austin, co-administered the estate. Suffering a series of personal tragedies in the next few years<sup>2</sup>, William Austin eventually relinquished his share of control of the grant. Then in 1834, Elizabeth married Thomas F. L. Parrott, and the next year Dr. Parrott became the sole administrator of the Austin Estate<sup>3</sup>. Thomas died in 1839, and then Elizabeth decided to nurture a community of farmers in an area called Germantown. Elizabeth Austin Parrott reportedly made numerous trips from her home in what is now Fort Bend County to visit Germantown. This was separate from the more familiar Frost Town, another German community, which was nestled together with the town of Houston.

In some ways it is easiest to describe Germantown by its borders. That's because the historical maps provided very specific information as to its location. The Sandusky Survey<sup>4</sup>, in 1839, was supposed to outline the community but no complete description of the town had survived until a later survey was completed in 1870 by W. H. Griffin<sup>5</sup>. In 1839, Germantown reportedly only extended as far west as Houston Avenue (near today's Interstate 45) and as far south as Boundary Street, but then it expanded during the latter part of the nineteenth century as evidenced by the later survey. Griffin's Survey showed Little White Oak Bayou cutting through the middle of Germantown, but no other landmarks were used in the map. When compared with today's city of Houston, Germantown (from the Griffin Survey) ran north to Loop 610, between Julian Street in the west<sup>6</sup> and about the Hardy Toll Road in the east. The farthest street to the east was called Danville Street, based on the notes, "East Line, John Austin" and "N.E. Corner of the John Austin 2 Leagues"<sup>7</sup>. To the south it extended to today's Byrne Avenue, which runs a few blocks north of White Oak Bayou<sup>8</sup>. This southern boundary stretched across Quitman Road, and along today's Line Street, formerly Vine Street<sup>9</sup>; For example, the note from the Harris County record titled, Hamblin's Addition, read: "South line of Germantown tract." The Griffin Survey had Germantown shaped in a rectangle.

One major and enduring road that ran through the community was Old Montgomery Road, sometimes referred to as West Montgomery Road or simply Montgomery Road; but since about 1921, it has been known as North Main<sup>10</sup>. Presumably West Montgomery Road was named for the traffic leading to and from Montgomery County. Henderson & Whitfield conducted a survey in 1868 which illustrated Montgomery Road cutting through the community diagonally from the northwest to the southeast; therefore, it crossed diagonally through lots #1, #10, and #11 of the Henderson & Whitfield survey within Germantown<sup>11</sup>. Although Old Montgomery Road was not indicated on the map of Houston in 1890, the mapping of the lots by Henderson & Whitfield in 1868 were indicated well within the boundaries of Germantown<sup>12</sup>, including lots #1, #10, and #11. Another indicator of the placement of



Montgomery Road came from the deed from William Grota to Louisa Drew (his daughter) and to F. W. Grota (his son). There is a map delineating the Grota Homestead in 1891 with Montgomery Road in the northeast, and the road was indeed indicated as running from the northwest to the southeast<sup>13</sup>. Again in 1906 the city map<sup>14</sup> presented Montgomery Road to the northeast of the Grota Homestead which was then listed as F. N. Grota (sic) having 15.08 acres and Mrs. Prew (sic, Mrs. Drew) having 15.08 acres directly to the south. These 15.08 acres for each descendant thus matched the amounts of land willed by William Grota to each of his children.

Beginning in about 1913 through 1921, Old/West Montgomery Road was in the process of being renamed North Main, as indicated by the City Directories and maps from that time period<sup>15</sup>. A few other streets were indicated by the Henderson & Whitfield map located in the Harris County Deed: Vol. 6, p. 241, as follows: running from west to east were 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> avenues. Presumably the most southerly was 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, although not named. The single road running from north to south was Front Avenue.

All of the Grota Homestead lay within Germantown but the Grota Homestead only made up the south-central part of Germantown<sup>16</sup>; and although the Grota family immigrated from Germany, it is unclear which part of Germany they came from. This investigation has been able to trace William Grota's initial purchases of land to deeds dated from 1859 and 1863, and each purchase was made cooperatively with William Puls<sup>17</sup>.

The 1900 United States Census<sup>18</sup> listed Fritz Grota (age 38) as a machinist, with his wife, Minnie (age 41), Fritz (Jr. age 15 years), Albert (13 years), John (age 11 years), Katie (age 9 years), and Edd (age 5 years). Eventually, the Grota family name was the only one associated with the land, which now hugs both sides of Interstate 45 from just north of White Oak Bayou (just north of Interstate 10) to North Main's crossing of Interstate 45. By 1891, William Grota (deceased) had willed his land to his daughter, Louisa Drew, and to his son, F. W. Grota<sup>19</sup>. A city map from 1895, showed the shared land between the Puls and Grota families<sup>20</sup>, but by 1906 only the Grota name remained<sup>21</sup>. There was even an east-west street named Grota<sup>22</sup>, but the I-45 construction eliminated that street. Both William Grota and William Puls defended their neighbors' claims to land (such as the affidavit in 1869)<sup>23</sup>. The Grota Homestead outlasted Germantown and became a working class neighborhood until Interstate 45 split the neighborhood during the mid 1960s. Then, several families and businesses had to move because of the I-45 construction. Today (2008), the Harris County Appraisal District<sup>24</sup> labels the Grota Homestead as "Germantown" even though the original Germantown extended well beyond the homestead. Discussions at the Woodland Heights Civic Association Meetings (a nearby neighborhood concerned with the I-45 expansion) also refer to the area as Germantown.

Another family that lived in Germantown was the Depenbrock family. From the illustration on the deed in 1891, from William Grota (deceased) to his daughter and his son, the Depenbrock farmland is included along the southern border of this area<sup>25</sup>. The 1880 United States Census<sup>26</sup> listed a Heinrich Depenbrock (age 59) as a gardener and Augusta Depenbrock (age 47, both from Prussia) living at Little White Oak Bayou with three boys (Friedrich, age 21; Heinrich, age 13; and Wilhelm, age 6) and two girls (Friedricke, age 16; and Augusta, age 9 years). Thirty years later, the 1910 Census<sup>27</sup> listed a William Depenbrock (age 37 years, farmer), with his wife, Maggie (age 35), and two children. Both the 1900 and the 1906 Houston maps illustrated the farmland for W. Depenbrock located just beyond the Houston city limits<sup>28</sup>. The address listed in the 1928 City Directory for W. A. Depenbrock was 301 North. By then the farmland was located within Houston and Germantown no longer existed independently from Houston. Finally, a map from 1942 of the Grota Homestead included an area located in the southeastern section with the overriding label of DEPENBROCK<sup>29</sup>. The streets of Edgewood and Parkview served as the northern and southern boundaries for this stretch of land with North located in between. The Depenbrocks, as well as many others, were active in testifying for affidavits in the defense of their neighbors' lands<sup>30</sup>.

The Grota Homestead and the Depenbrock farm were located in the south-central part of Germantown, but another part of Germantown, called Hamblin's Extension, lay along the eastern por. →



tion<sup>31</sup> Today, nine of the streets that were proposed by Hamblin have kept their original names from the proposal made in 1870 as surveyed by William H. Griffin, the same person who surveyed all of Germantown. As mentioned before, land is included along the southern border of this area<sup>25</sup>. The 1880 United States Census<sup>26</sup> listed a the eastern edge of Germantown can be compared to today's Hardy Toll Road.

In 1866 there was a bold attempt to develop the southwestern portion of Germantown, which at the time was primarily farmland. Much of that land lay within Germantown, but some of it was inside the city of Houston. This was called Ketcham's Addition<sup>32</sup>. The map found in the Harris County Records Office included the most westerly street, Trott Street, with the notation, "West line of the Germantown tract". Little development occurred so Ketcham sold his land to Likens<sup>33</sup> in 1872. Almost nothing is known of Likens other than the land was subsequently transferred to others within a short period of time. By the beginning of the twentieth century a significant portion of Ketcham's Addition became Parks & Delery<sup>34</sup>. The interesting part of the deed to Likens was the hand-drawn map indicating the location of the homes of the farmers who actually lived in the surrounding area, both inside and outside Germantown: They were often German immigrants. Maps from 1906 through 1912 clearly illustrated the neighborhood called Parks and Delery<sup>35</sup>. W. S. Delery and L. J. Parks were the original promoters for the neighborhood, but both men had died before 1900; and Mrs. Rosie (or Rosine) Parks was left in charge of the neighborhood after they died<sup>36</sup>.

Additionally, the Woodland Heights filled out the southwestern corner of Germantown with Julian Street and the Klunkert farmland serving as landmarks for the southwestern extent of Germantown. Working from the Woodland Heights Plat of 1907, the map drawn on the Plat includes the Germantown Line running through the houses located on the northern side of White Oak Avenue, today's Byrne Street<sup>37</sup>. The "Field Notes" included within the 1907 Plat describe the southern border of Germantown: "on the South line of the Germantown Survey thence West along the Germantown Line . . ." The Field Notes also described the western border of Germantown: "Thence West along the Germantown lines 1083.3 feet to the East fence of what was formerly known as the Dr. Perl tract"<sup>38</sup>, which had been sold twenty years before to the Bayland Orphanage<sup>39</sup>. The Plat's map indicated Julian Street as running along the western edge of the Woodland Heights. Within the Plat for the Woodland Heights and above the section titled "Field Notes" is a preliminary paragraph that included the statement:

"Woodland Heights lies in the east half of the two league grant in Harris County Texas made to John Austin and comprises Blocks Seventy four (74) and Seventy five (75) and lots three (3) and four (4) on Block Seventy two (72) of the Germantown Survey: Lot three (3) in Block Seventy one (71), and lots two (2) and three (3) in Block Seventy six (76) of the Germantown Survey."<sup>40</sup>

Undoubtedly, the 1870 "Plan of the Germantown Survey"<sup>41</sup> was being referred to in the descriptions provided in the Woodland Heights Plat. Additionally, it can easily be noted that the "Blocks" described in the Woodland Heights Plat (i.e., 74, 75, and parts of 71, 72, and 76) comprised the southwestern corner of Germantown in Griffin's Survey. And finally, the southwestern boundary of Germantown was marked in Ketcham's sale of land in 1872 with the notation on that map written as "Southwestern Corner G. T."<sup>42</sup>

Over the course of the nineteenth century the community of Germantown remained largely rural. Meanwhile, its sponsor, Elizabeth Austin, had other issues that probably distracted her from this project. She remarried for a third time by 1845 (widowed twice over) and had moved at least twice with her third husband, William Pierpoint<sup>43</sup> by 1852. Eventually, Germantown received immigrants other than Germans. It began losing its particular Germanic influx as a possible result of this drift in Elizabeth's purpose and faded away by the early twentieth century. The last reference that this investigation found in relation to Germantown was in the 1907 Plat for the Woodland Heights<sup>44</sup>. The only clear population figures found<sup>45</sup> (from the late part of the nineteenth century) demonstrated characteristics consistent →

with the idea that the uniqueness of the original settlers of the area (i.e., German immigrants) was fading because other settlers were moving into Germantown; In that year, 1880, the listings for the residents of Little White Oak Bayou could be directly compared to Germantown. The reason for that comparison is that Little White Oak Bayou ran through the heart of Germantown and covered a major portion of it. This deduction is based on a survey of Germantown by Griffin<sup>46</sup> as well as a later mapping<sup>47</sup> of the area in 1890. Additionally, there were several pages in the 1880 Census that were dedicated solely to indexing the residents of Little White Oak Bayou. This investigation found that out of the 69 households listed in the pages labeled, "Little White Oak Bayou," 22 of them could be directly attributed to German immigrants in one or both of the heads of the households. Some of the places that these immigrants came from were Prussia (the most common place of origin), Hanover, and Saxony. Fifteen of the male heads of the households were farmers or "gardners," and all but one of the female heads of these same households were "keeping house." This study of the 1880 Census corresponds with a study done by Judy Granberry in 2000. In an effort to attain a historical designation for Germantown she studied the city records (i.e., city directories) which described the population as composed of farmers<sup>48</sup>, then later of working class folk such as police officers, carpenters, and laborers. At this time (2008) the historical designation has not been realized. This investigation did not uncover a census page that specifically targeted Germantown, per se, but the 1880 Census did provide listings that could be directly related to Germantown through the location, Little White Oak Bayou.

With the unpopularity caused by onset of two wars with Germany and the I-45 Highway construction, the cultural vestiges of Germantown have virtually disappeared from the area<sup>49</sup>. Although the German language was spoken there and in the churches located within the City of Houston until about 1912, it did not last much longer<sup>50</sup>. The second and third generation descendants had lost their ability to even understand, much less speak, the German language. Of course, the war with Germany made speaking the language even more unpopular. Although Germantown was clearly indicated as a community with boundaries, this investigation was unable to find any record of a mayor nor of a city council in any English language document. Perhaps there are records in historical German language newspapers that would carry that information. Germantown would remain largely rural until many years later, the 1920s.

On the other hand, the immigrant community living near the confluence of White Oak Bayou and Little White Oak Bayou can be described in personal terms, and these families have had a lasting impact on the area. This community was located just south and west of Germantown. For example, just beyond the western border of Germantown, Henry Stude purchased 26 acres of land by 1859 from William Obermuller: "north side of White Oak Bayou . . . about one half mile west or above Beauchamp Spring."<sup>51</sup> Incidentally, William Obermuller was listed in the 1870 Census<sup>52</sup> as a farmer, age 32, from Prussia. The Stude family had also immigrated from Prussia, and eventually gained possession of large swaths of land on both the north and south sides of White Oak Bayou<sup>53</sup>. This area was shared between Henry and Alphonse Stude. The 1880 Census<sup>54</sup> reported that Alphonse (25 years old) was the head of the household, Charles (aged 30 years) was his cousin, and that Henry (age 55 years) was the father. This area became heavily wooded, and became known as "Stude's Wood", which is the name (i.e., Studewood) of a road running north and south just on the west side of today's Norhill Subdivision. Additionally, Wood's map from 1869 indicated a place on a bend in the bayou (where Henry Stude's name was listed) as Magnolia Gardens. Little else is known of that place. In 1890 Henry Stude, age 67, owned much of the land located north and south of White Oak Bayou<sup>55</sup>, and the City Directory listed him as a fruit grower. The 1880 Census listed Alphonse Stude's professions as grocer and baker. Charles Stude was also listed as a baker in the 1880 census<sup>56</sup>. The Stude Bakery was considered the leading bakery in Houston during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>57</sup>. It was located across from Market Square. During the early part of the twentieth century another Henry Stude was one of the stakeholders in the development of the Norhill Subdivision, a neighborhood located just west of the Woodland Heights<sup>58</sup>. This Henry Stude was also head of the Texas Bread Company<sup>59</sup>. The Houston City Directory for 1951 listed Alphonse Stude, Jr. as the City →



Water Director. The farmland that bordered White Oak Bayou's north side was eventually donated as parkland by the Stude children in April of 1915, and by that time they had already moved away from the White Oak Bayou area<sup>60</sup>. Other family members included Emily, Rhetta, and Micajah. Today, Stude Park is located on the north side of White Oak Bayou on the east side of Studewood Drive. There is a story from the Painter family (Byrne Avenue) that Henry Stude continued to have dairy cows on the Stude land in the latter 1910's, and Clarence Painter and his friend, Reichart, would milk the cows and deliver the milk to local residents in pails or buckets<sup>61</sup>. The Stude family never seemed to have lived in the White Oak Bayou area for any length of time, so their impact upon the White Oak Bayou area resulted from the family's decisions on two separate tracts of land: the donation for parkland and the development of the Norhill subdivision from a heavily wooded area into a suburban neighborhood.

Another family worthy of note was the Klunkert family. Ernst and Wilhelmina Klunkert immigrated from Prussia<sup>62</sup> to Texas in 1854. They had six children, but outlived all but one of them<sup>63</sup>. Although it is true that five of their children had died by 1900, the reality was that by then they did have grandchildren. As to their children, the First German Evangelical Lutheran Church's baptismal records<sup>64</sup> (as translated from the original Moravian script entries from that time) included the birth dates: Mary, born March 4, 1859; Ernst, Jr., born October 27, 1861; Pauline Wilhelmine, born November 21, 1863; Emma, born December 9, 1865; Louis, born December 9, 1865; and Frederick Johann Theodor, born April 8, 1871. The Klunkert name appeared in the Houston City Directory as early as 1867, when it listed a D. Klunkert (sic) as a gardener assigned to stall number 15 at the market. Also, the Klunkert name appeared on an 1869 map to mark land located just beyond the northwest edge of Houston<sup>65</sup>. The family purchased their 11.73 acres of land from Florence McCarty<sup>66</sup> on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 1867 for \$1750. In the sale of land from Ketcham to Likens in 1872, the western side of the map stated, "Southwestern Corner G.T.<sup>67</sup>" with the name, "Klunker," (sic) indicating the Klunkert house located on the western side of an unnamed north-south road just beyond Ketcham's land. Thus, it was located just west of the border for Germantown. Based on tax records for supplies<sup>68</sup>, the Klunkert farmhouse was built around 1875 and continues to stand in its original location on the western side of Julian Street, which became the western border of the Woodland Heights<sup>69</sup>. The 1890-91 City Directory described Ernst Klunkert's residence as being located west of Beauchamp Springs Road. In 1868, the Klunkerts had been granted a right-of way<sup>70</sup> from their neighbors, the Wichmanns, another family that had immigrated from Germany. Mary Klunkert, the eldest child, married her neighbor, Robert Wendt, had two children (William Ernst and Otto Edward), then died in childbirth with her third child<sup>71</sup>. Just over a year later, her sister, Emma Klunkert, also married Robert (a widower), had two children (Frederick Louis and Lily Amalia), then died during her third childbirth<sup>72</sup>. On March 1st, 1901, the Galveston Daily News reported the death of Ernst Klunkert Sr. (the death had occurred on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 1901) at Market Square, apparently of heart failure<sup>73</sup>. In 1906 Wilhelmina Klunkert, a widow, finally sold the Deed of Sale to Fred William Allen with Ernest Klunkert Jr. and others, including members of the Windt family listed as witnesses<sup>74</sup>. She then reportedly moved to Washington Avenue. The 1900 Census<sup>75</sup> reported that Ernst Jr, (age 38) was married to a Mary (age 23), but no children were listed. Wobbe<sup>76</sup> reported that Ernst Jr. bought some land farther west on White Oak Bayou, but so far this investigation has been unable to track down the exact location for that land. Harris County lists the former Klunkert homestead along with the 1875 farmhouse, as being in the Ridgemont Addition<sup>77</sup>. Today the Klunkert farmhouse stands in its original location at 2911 Julian Street in Houston.

The Wendts, whose family name was later changed to Windt<sup>78</sup>, were neighbors living directly on 4.67 acres to the southeast of the Klunkerts. Joachim Wendt, a German immigrant, bought three acres (January, 1855) and then one and 4/7 of an acre (October, 1857) north of White Oak Bayou from Robert Kuykendall<sup>79</sup>. The Windt/Wendt farmland also appeared on maps from 1869, 1900 and 1906 as being directly southeast of the Klunkert farmland<sup>80</sup>. Joachim's son, Robert Windt, (born in 1854) was the one who changed the family name from Wendt to Windt<sup>81</sup>. Robert's reasoning was that "there were too many Wendts!" His mother was Mary Maotaus (widowed, age 67 in 1880)<sup>82</sup>. As noted before, Robert married his neighbor, Mary Klunkert, and together they had two children who survived into →



adulthood, but she sadly died during her third childbirth<sup>83</sup> in 1883. Robert then married Mary's sister, Emma Klunkert. Together they would have two children; but like Mary, Emma died during her third childbirth<sup>84</sup> in 1890, and the child lived only for a couple of weeks. Joachim and Mary's farmland, just north of White Oak Bayou, is clearly shown on a map<sup>85</sup> from 1869. The Windt family would remain on the land until 1910, when Robert Windt sold the "Wendt Tract" to P. H. Briant with a small portion reserved for his son, Otto Windt<sup>86</sup>. Robert, a widower twice over, and his third wife, Amelia (nee Bortz), moved to the corner of Pecore and Beauchamp<sup>87</sup>. Years later, Robert recalled how the area where the Woodland Heights (i.e., southwest Germantown) is located was a "jungle" when he was a young man<sup>88</sup>. From his new home Robert would continue to have an impact upon the neighborhood by helping to organize Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1914 with the help of his third wife, Amelia<sup>89</sup>. And by 1915, Robert had the job of supervising the construction of Zion's original church building. For a while Robert Windt and his sons worked for the William Wilson Realty Company as carpenters in constructing the Woodland Heights neighborhood, but eventually the situation changed. Robert retired, and in the late 1920's his son, Otto, bought a grocery store on Beauchamp Street at Redan from the Kuhlman family<sup>90</sup>, also of German descent. The store still stands. Robert Windt died at the age of 91 in January 1946, and his third and last wife, Amelia, died in 1948. At the Woodland Heights Centennial Tea Party held at Zion Lutheran Church (on Beauchamp Street) in June, 2007, numerous attendees were descendants of the Windt family.

Other immigrant residents of the White Oak Bayou community included Carl/Charles Wickeman, sometimes spelled Wichman, sometimes spelled Wickman. The 1870 Census listed a Charles Weikman, age 46 years, as a gardener, from Prussia, his wife, Mary (age 30), sons Henry and H????, and a daughter, Hannah<sup>91</sup>. His name first appeared on a map from 1869 just north of White Oak Bayou<sup>92</sup>. Charles/Carl Wichman received his first 10 acres from Caroline Knoll<sup>93</sup> ("N S OF White Oak") in 1858. Charles Wickeman was listed in the 1870-71 City Directory as a gardener at stall number 18 in the Houston Market and residing at "White Oak bayou"<sup>94</sup>. There was a Wichman noted on the map in the sale of land in 1872 between Ketcham to Likens with a road leading across White Oak Bayou<sup>95</sup>. The 1880 Census<sup>96</sup> listed a road called Wickeman as located "Beyond Beauchamp Springs," presumably north of White Oak Bayou since the others listed on the same page were also living north of White Oak Bayou - such as the Windts. As mentioned before, the Klunkerts lived just north of the Wichman family and had gained a right-of-way from them in 1868, presumably to cross White Oak Bayou<sup>97</sup>. One of the plats for the Woodland Terrace<sup>98</sup>, a neighborhood located just south of the Woodland Heights, indicated exactly where the Wichman farmland lay. As the street of Greenleaf led south towards White Oak Bayou, it pointed, in faded script, directly to "Wichman Tract" located south of White Oak Drive (now parkland). Then the Wichman name led across Thelma Street and ended at Gladys Street with Wendel Street as the most northerly extent of the Wichman tract of land. Today, 2008, south of White Oak Bayou, there is a small road leading north from Washington Street with the name, Wichman.

Bertha Koenig, whose occupation was farming, (age 58 in 1880) was a surviving widow to August Koenig<sup>99</sup>. Their land lay between Beauchamp Street and Houston Avenue. The Highland Addition Plat<sup>100</sup> from 1904 illustrated the Koenig Homestead greatly reduced from its previous 6 acres<sup>101</sup> to 2.3 acres. In 1904, Robert Windt and J. F. Depenbrock testified in a pair of affidavits in the defense of Bertha Koenig's claim to her land<sup>102</sup>. Unfortunately, the reduced Koenig land appeared on the City Map from 1906 where Beauchamp Street and Houston Boulevard met<sup>103</sup>. Other streets to note from the former Koenig farmland were Fritz and Bismark. By then the Highland Addition had taken over the land (courtesy of the Houston Electric Company). The Koenigs had originally bought their land from J. J. Weiss<sup>104</sup>

Bertha's neighbor's included Frederick and Julia Weber<sup>105</sup>, both from Prussia. The 1880 Census listed a Fred Weber, occupation of farmer, age 59, living "beyond Beauchamp Springs," with their children listed as Edith, Hy, Mollie, and Mena<sup>106</sup>. The eldest child was Edith, age 21 years. From about 1879 Frederick had been farming on the east side of Houston Avenue<sup>107</sup>. The Weber farmland could be noted on a 1906 map where Houston Avenue crossed the north side of White Oak Bayou<sup>108</sup>. The →

1890-91 City Directory<sup>109</sup> listed Frederick Weber as “grace beer Crockery, res es Beauchamp Spring 1<sup>st</sup> r.n of White Oak Bayou” (p. 415).

Harris County Deed Records<sup>110</sup> documented the sale of 10 ¼ acres from Margaret O’ Dey and Peter O’Dey to Otto Eckert in 1883. The deed described the land being “situated North of White Oak Bayou beginning at the mouth of a ravine in a large gully . . . to a stake in Wendts south line”: The Eckert family lived south of the Wendts. Additionally, this description matches a gully that begins at the corner of Michaux and Ridge that deepens into a ravine at the southern end of Julian. The 1900 Census<sup>111</sup> listed an Otto Eckert, age 51, as having emigrated from Germany in 1871, with a wife, Johanna (age 43), and two daughters and a stepson: The neighbors (next line of the census) were Robert and Amelia Windt. Stoner’s (1910) Map shows the Eckert land directly south of the Windt farm<sup>112</sup>.

A gardener listed as L. Fritz is also found in the 1867-68 City Directory with a stall (#13) at the City Market<sup>113</sup>. This gardener was listed as residing at Beauchamp Springs. The 1906 Map<sup>114</sup> had a small road called Fritz that was located between Beauchamp and Houston Avenues, perhaps not coincidentally.

As with many other immigrants, the Germans utilized religious and family events to bring neighbors together. Baptisms, weddings, and funerals were commonly opportunities for neighbors and families to take the time away from working to develop a sense of community<sup>115</sup>. One example was in the baptism of Otto Edward Wendt: He was born on March 20, 1881, and was baptized February 1, 1883. Heinrich Wickmann and Otto Eckert were listed among the godparents. Robert Wendt had Bertha Koenig and Henrietta Stute as his godparents. Emma Klunkert’s godparents included Maria Wichmann. Lily Amalia Wendt had Henry Puls as one of her godparents. The Wichmans, Eckerts, Puls, Koenigs, Klunkerts, and Wendts were among the neighbors who cooperated and gathered together to create a community among the farmers living near White Oak Bayou during the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Though this investigation is limited by the fact that much more information is available about the community of German immigrants who settled north of White Oak Bayou than those who settled in the area known as Germantown, this paper surely reflects the accomplishments, joys and sorrows felt by most of them. This was obvious at the Woodland Heights’ Centennial Tea Party when so many families felt a kinship in what proved to be something of a reunion for all, especially for those who were descendants of those same German immigrants. For future investigation there is the possibility that information concerning Germantown can be gleaned from German-language newspapers from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. We encourage others to follow up on this.

## Germantown References

<sup>1</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume B, p. 129 (John Austin reiterated his claim to the Mexican Grant: Note: In his claim to the Republic of Texas John Austin claimed July 16, 1823 instead of 1824 to be the date he received the grant).

<sup>2</sup> [www.tshaonline.org](http://www.tshaonline.org) (The Handbook of Texas Online) “Texas History Online” (William Tennant Austin’s troubles).

<sup>3</sup> Tyler, Ron (Editor-in-Chief) (1996) *The New Handbook of Texas, Volume 5*, pp. 72-73 (Thomas F. L. Parrott); Glass, James (1986). *A Replica Chart of the Galveston-Houston Area Circa 1836*. Kelvin Press, Houston Texas; Glass, James (1983). *1836 Sesquicentennial Bay Chart (1824-1837)*. All of the charts/maps referred to in this paper are available for viewing in the Texas Room, part of the Houston Public Library’s Special Collection of local and state history (Elizabeth Parrott).

<sup>4</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume E, p. 185; *ibid*, Glass, 1983; *ibid*, Glass, 1986: Sandusky Survey, commissioned in 1839.

<sup>5</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume 9A, p. 257: Griffin Survey of Germantown in 1870.

<sup>6</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume 2, p. 33 Old Maps (OM): Woodland Heights Plat of 1907. (Julian Street).

<sup>7</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume Z, p. 601; Deeds: Volume 9A, pp. 109-111 (East line of Germantown).

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 2, p. 33 OM: South line of Germantown.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume Z, p. 601: South line of Germantown.

<sup>10</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume 56, pp. 537-538 (William Grota to F. W. Grota and Louisa Drew in 1891); Whitty, P. (1904). *Houston 1904 Street Guide*; Whitty, P., (1906). [Map of] *Houston, January 1906*, P. Whitty Surveyor.; Harris County Deeds: Volume 6, p. 241 (Montgomery Road is illustrated in the Whitfield & Henderson Survey); City of Houston Directories from 1913 to 1921.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 6, p. 241: Henderson & Whitfield Survey of 1868.

<sup>12</sup> Porter, Pollard, & Ruby, (1890). *Official Map of the City of Houston and Adjoining Surveys Compiled from the Records of Harris County, Texas*. By Porter, Pollard, & Ruby, Abstractors of Titles, St. Louis. (Map of Germantown with the



Henderson & Whitfield Survey in context); *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 6, p. 241).

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 56, pp. 537-538: Montgomery Road and the Grota Homestead in 1891.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid*, Whitty, 1906: Montgomery Road in context.

<sup>15</sup> City of Houston Directories from 1913 to 1921; Stoner, J. H., Engineer & Surveyor, (1910). 1910 Map of the City of Houston and Vicinity. Copyright by Texas Map & Blue Printing Co.; Engineering Department (1921). Map of Houston, Harris County Texas, City of Houston, Tex.: Illustrating the name change from Montgomery Road to North Main.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid*, Porter, Pollard, & Ruby, 1890; Whitty, P. & Stott, J. (1895). [Map] City of Houston and Environs, Whitty & Stott Engineers & Surveyors, Houston, TX.

<sup>17</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume V, p. 320; Deeds: Volume Z, p. 635; Deeds: Volume 1, p. 62: William Grota's initial purchases of land with William Puls.

<sup>18</sup> Heritage Quest Online via Houston Public Library> Research>Genealogy> 1900 Census: Sheet 13, Sup. District 1124??, Enumeration District 63: Fritz Grota.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 56, pp. 537-538: Grota Homestead.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*, Whitty & Stott, 1895 (Shared land between Puls and Grota).

<sup>21</sup> *ibid*, Whitty, 1906 (only the Grota name remains).

<sup>22</sup> Bracey, H. L. (1942). Bracey's Block Maps of the City of Houston, Compiled, Drawn & Copyrighted by H. L. Bracey, Land Appraiser, City Tax Office, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 137: Grota Street.

<sup>23</sup> Harris County Deeds; Volume 8, p. 85: Affidavit by Grota & Puls.

<sup>24</sup> [www.hcad.org](http://www.hcad.org) (Harris County Appraisal District Website): Grota Homestead is called Germantown.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 56, pp. 537-538: Depenbrock name illustrated in 1891.

<sup>26</sup> 1880 Census: Heritage Quest Online via Houston Public Library Website: Research>Genealogy>Keyword: Depenbrock: Page 15, District 4, Enumeration District 82: Depenbrock family.

<sup>27</sup> 1910 Census: Sheet 7B, Supervisor's District 8, Enumeration District 42, Keyword: William Depenbrock.

<sup>28</sup> Whitty, P. (1900). Map of Houston, Harris County Texas, Compiled, Published, and Copyrighted by P. Whitty, Civil Engineer, Published by E. P. Noll & Co. Map Publishers, Philadelphia, PA.; *ibid*, Whitty 1906: Depenbrock farmland

<sup>29</sup> *ibid*, Bracey's, 1942, p. 137: DEPENBROCK.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 8, p. 85; Deeds: Volume 171, pp. 175-176: Depenbrocks testify.

<sup>31</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume 13, p. 613; Deeds: Volume 9A, pp. 109-111: Hamblin's Extension.

<sup>32</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume 3, p. 177: Ketcham's Addition in 1866.

<sup>33</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume 10, pp. 266-268: Ketcham sells to Likens.

<sup>34</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume 212, p. 89; Deeds: Volume 208, p. 256 (Parks & Delery); Deeds: Volume 136, pp. 353-355, Deeds: Volume 188, p. 412.

<sup>35</sup> *ibid*, Whitty, 1906; Sanborn, 1907 (available through the Houston Library Research Website); *ibid*, Stoner, 1910; Alexander, A. M. (1912). 1912 Houston Street Guide. Houston Map & Blue Print Co., J/M Kelson & Co. Distributors.: Maps of Parks & Delery.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 188, p. 412; Deeds: Volume 136, pp. 353-355 (Rosie/Rosine Parks was left in charge of Parks & Delery).

<sup>37</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 2, p. 33 OM: SW Corner of Germantown.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 2, p. 33 OM, Dr. Perl Tract.

<sup>39</sup> Fall, Mrs. Henry (Editor). The Key to the City of Houston (1908). Houston: State Printing Company ; Beverly, Trevia Wooster. (2003). Suffer the Children: A History of the Confederate Orphanage at Baylands, Harris County, Texas 1867 to May 1918. (Houston: Tejas Publications & Research): Sale of Dr. Perl Tract for Bayland Orphanage.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 2, p. 33 OM: Field Notes.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 9A, p. 257: referred to in Volume 2, p. 33 OM.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 10, pp. 266-268: SW Corner G.T.

<sup>43</sup> Tyler, Ron (Editor-in-Chief) (1996). The New Handbook of Texas, Volume 5, p. 197 (William Pierpoint and Elizabeth Austin).

<sup>44</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 2, p. 33 OM (last known reference to Germantown in the Harris County Deed Records).

<sup>45</sup> 1880 Census: Heritage Quest Online via Houston Public Library> Research>Genealogy> Keyword: Depenbrock: Page 15, Sup. District 4, Enumeration District 82; Page 17, Sup. District 4, Enumeration District 82; Page 14, Sup. District 4, Enumeration District 82; Page 13, Sup. District 4, Enumeration District 82; Page 11, Sup. District 4, Enumeration District 82; Page 10, Sup. District 4, Enumeration District 82; Page 9, Sup. District 11, Enumeration District 82 (Little White Oak Bayou).

<sup>46</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 9A, p. 257: Griffin Survey of Germantown in 1870.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid*, Porter, Pollard, & Ruby, 1890 (later mapping of Germantown).

<sup>48</sup> Hajovsky, Martin (July 19, 2000). *Houston Chronicle*, "Past Protecting the Future: Germantown designation reaches advanced stage." (Interview with Granberry).

<sup>49</sup> Salee, Rad (February 9, 2006). *Houston Chronicle*, "Preservation group says local neighborhood under threat: Grota Homestead, Wilshire Village Apartments added to the endangered list;" Raymond, (1991). Twelve Adventurous Decades, 1875-1990: A History of: Emanuel German Methodist Episcopal Church 1875-1891, Zion German Methodist Episcopal →



Church 1891-1924, Norhill Methodist Episcopal Church 1924-1939, Woodland Heights Methodist Episcopal Church, South 1913-1939, St. Mark's Methodist Church 1938-1968, St. Mark's United Methodist Church 1968-/ (Houston TX: The Church, 1991). (cultural vestiges of Germantown disappearing).

<sup>50</sup> *ibid*, Moers, 1991 (German language fades).

<sup>51</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume V, p. 319 (Sale from Obermuller to Henry Stude in 1859).

<sup>52</sup> 1870 Census: Series M593, Roll 1589, page 698 (William Obermuller).

<sup>53</sup> *ibid*, Stoner, 1910; *ibid*, Porter, Pollard, & Ruby, 1890; *ibid*, Whitty 1900; *ibid*, Whitty, 1906: Stude family possesses large pieces of land near White Oak Bayou.

<sup>54</sup> 1880 Census: Page No. 5, Supervisor's District 4, Enumeration District (5)76 (Stude family) Note: The father was listed as HY, probably for Henry, age 55.

<sup>55</sup> Wood, W. E. (1869). [Map of] City of Houston, Harris Co. Texas, Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1869 (an excellent copy of this map was on display in the foyer of the San Jacinto Monument in March 2008); City Directory for 1890-91 (Henry Stude).

<sup>56</sup> *ibid*, 1880 Census: Stude family, Charles Stude.

<sup>57</sup> McComb, David G., (1981), Houston: A History. University of Texas Press: Austin; Johnston, Marguerite. (1991). Houston, The Unknown City 1836-1946, College Station: Texas A & M University Press. (Stude Bakery).

<sup>58</sup> Fox, Stephen, (undated). <http://community.rice.edu/focusresources/reference/fox.html> (Henry W. Stude was among those who promoted the Norhill Subdivision)

<sup>59</sup> Houston Chronicle Book: Leading Businessmen of 1924, Houston, Texas: Henry Stude and the Texas Bread Company.

<sup>60</sup> Johnston, Marguerite (1991). Houston: The Unknown City 1836-1946 (College Station: Texas A & M University Press): Stude children donated farmland for parkland.

<sup>61</sup> Janeen Cook, descendant of Rolle Painter; The Painter family stills lives in the house on 530 Byrne, once known as White Oak Avenue, since about 1907; Woodland Heights Centennial Home Tour, 2007.

<sup>62</sup> 1880 Census: Page 17, Sup. District 4, Enumeration District 82: Klunkert family.

<sup>63</sup> 1900 Census: Supervisor's District 11, Enumeration District 103, Sheet No. 18A (Ernst Klunkert Sr. outlived five of his six children).

<sup>64</sup> First German Evangelical Lutheran Church Records; Family Records from Ginger Daily, a descendant of Mary Klunkert; *ibid*, 1880 Census: keyword: Klunkert.

<sup>65</sup> *ibid*, Wood, 1869 (the Klunkert name appears on map; an excellent copy was on display in the foyer of the San Jacinto Monument in March of 2008).

<sup>66</sup> Wobbe, Gail. (undated and unsigned but likely late 1980s and the current owners, Robert Mott and Linda Nations attribute the paper to Gail, a former owner of the house on Julian). "2911 Julian" located in the Woodland Heights Folder in the Texas Room, a special collection of Texas and local history, Houston Public Library; Harris County Deeds: Volume 4, p. 313 (Florence McCarty to Ernst Klunkert Sr.); *ibid*, Porter, Pollard, & Ruby, 1890: Note that every map from the collection in the Texas Room from 1890 listed Florence McCarty instead of Ernst Klunkert for the land: This was the mapmakers' error since the purchase was made years before.

<sup>67</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume 10, pp. 266-268: Ketcham to Likens in 1872 (Klunkert name appears).

<sup>68</sup> *ibid*, Wobbe, 1980s (Wobbe discusses the purchase of materials in 1875 for the Klunkert farmhouse).

<sup>69</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 2, p. 33 OM (Julian Street is the western boundary of both the Woodland Heights and Germantown).

<sup>70</sup> Deeds: Volume 188, p. 252: Wilhelmina Klunkert referred to an earlier deed in which the Klunkerts were granted a right-of-way through the Wichman farmland.

<sup>71</sup> *ibid*, First German Evangelical Lutheran Church Records; Ginger Daily: Family Records.

<sup>72</sup> *ibid*, First German Evangelical Lutheran Church Records; Ginger Daily: Family Records.

<sup>73</sup> *Galveston Daily News*: March 1, 1901 Issue, but the article, "Heart Failure," is dated February 25, 1901. Thanks to David Hornburg for finding this article.

<sup>74</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume 188, p. 252: In 1906, Wilhelmina Klunkert sold the Klunkert Homestead.

<sup>75</sup> 1900 Census: Series T623, Roll 1642, Page 288 (aka, Supervisor's District 11, Enumeration District 103, Sheet No. 2B): Ernst Klunkert Jr. was found only by going backwards through the pages from his father's listing, not by keying in the name Klunkert (via Heritage Quest; also thanks to Florence Clark from the Woodland Heights Historical Marker Committee for finding the physical listing in the Clayton Genealogy Library of the Houston Public Library System).

<sup>76</sup> *ibid*, Wobbe, 1980s: A member of the Klunkert family bought land after the homestead was sold, but the specifics for the purchase are not listed, only the general whereabouts. Presumably it was Ernst, Jr. the only surviving child at that time.

<sup>77</sup> [www.hcad.org](http://www.hcad.org) (Harris County Appraisal District Website): The house is listed as having been built in 1875.

<sup>78</sup> Ginger Daily: a descendant of Robert Windt and Mary Klunkert, family records, and First Evangelical Lutheran Church Records (in an older Germanic style script).

<sup>79</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume P, p. 485; Deeds: Volume T, p. 318: Robert Kuykendall to Joachim Wendt (January, 1855 & October, 1857).

<sup>80</sup> *ibid*, Wood, 1869; *ibid*, Whitty, 1900; *ibid*, Whitty, 1906: Wendt/Windt farmland is indicated on these maps.

<sup>81</sup> Ginger Daily: descendant of Robert Windt: He was the one who changed the family name to Windt from Wendt.

<sup>82</sup> 1880 Census: p. 58, Sup. District 4, Enumeration District 1(72); City Directory for 1878: Mary Wendt was widowed and was listed as "mother" not as "wife;" Family records from Virginia Daily: Descendant of Robert Windt and Mary →

Klunkert Windt; 1880 Census: p. 58, Sup. District 4, Enumeration District 1(72).

<sup>83</sup> Family records from Ginger Daily: Descendant of Robert Windt and Mary Klunkert.

<sup>84</sup> Family records from Ginger Daily: Descendant of Robert Windt and great-grand-niece of Emma Klunkert.

<sup>85</sup> *ibid*, Wood, 1869.

<sup>86</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume 244, pp. 390-391: Robert and Amelia Windt sell the Windt farmland to P. H. Briant in 1910.

<sup>87</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume 221, p. 437: Affidavit by Robert and Amelia Windt.

<sup>88</sup> Burkhardt, Alice (Editor): Fiftieth Anniversary 1914-1964: Zion Lutheran Church, Annie Hirschfield (compiler of the historical data); Tomchesson, Cheryl: Jubilee Committee Editor (1989). Proclaim Jubilee: Commemorating the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of Zion Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas (1914-1989): Robert Windt recalled the land in southwest Germantown as a jungle.

<sup>89</sup> *ibid*, Burkhardt, (1964); *ibid*, Tomchesson, 1989: Robert and Amelia Windt help to organize Zion Lutheran Church.

<sup>90</sup> Family Records from Virginia Daily; City Directory listings from 1929-1946.

<sup>91</sup> 1870 Census: page 17, Supervisor's District 4, Enumeration District 81, Sixth Precinct: Wichman family.

<sup>92</sup> *ibid*, Wood, 1869: Wichman name shows up on map.

<sup>93</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume U, p. 584: Caroline Knoll sells to Charles Wickeman in 1858.

<sup>94</sup> City Directory for 1870-71: Charles Wickeman.

<sup>95</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 10, pp. 266-268: Wichman land indicated.

<sup>96</sup> *ibid*, 1880 Census: p. 58, Sup. District 4, Enumeration District 1(72): Wickeman Road.

<sup>97</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 188, p. 252: Reference made to right-of-way gained from the Wichmans.

<sup>98</sup> Harris County Deeds: Volume 7, p. 22 OM: Woodland Terrace Plat.

<sup>99</sup> 1880 Census: page 57A, Sup. District 4, Enumeration District 1(72) (Bertha Koenig); First German Evangelical Lutheran Church Records: p. 4, #38 (1853), August Koenig served as the parent sponsor for one of his own children so he was the spouse to Bertha Koenig.

<sup>100</sup> Deeds: Volume 1A, p. 81 OM: Highland Addition Plat.

<sup>101</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 171, pp. 175-176: Affidavits for Bertha Koenig's claim in 1904.

<sup>102</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 171, pp. 175-176: Robert Windt and J. F. Depenbrock testify.

<sup>103</sup> *ibid*, Whitty, 1906 (reduced Koenig land).

<sup>104</sup> *ibid*, Deeds: Volume 171, pp. 175-176: Bertha Koenig refers to J. J. Weiss as the previous owner of the land. Of note is that a 1910 Census listing (Sheet 2A, Sup. District 8, Enum. District 49) has her living in the First Ward as the mother to J. J. Weiss.

<sup>105</sup> 1880 Census: Page 57A, Supervisor's District 4, Enumeration District 1(72) (Keyword: Fred Weber).

<sup>106</sup> 1880 Census page 57A, Sup. District 4, Enumeration District 1(72): Fred Weber.

<sup>107</sup> City Directory for 1879, p. 223 (Fred Weber).

<sup>108</sup> *ibid*, Whitty, 1906 (Weber land).

<sup>109</sup> 1890-91 City Directory, p. 415: Frederick Weber.

<sup>110</sup> Deeds: Volume 28, 31: Margaret and Peter O'Dey sell to Otto Eckert, in 1883.

<sup>111</sup> 1900 Census: Supervisor's District 11, Enumeration District 99, Sheet No. 12B (Otto Eckert).

<sup>112</sup> *ibid*, Stoner, 1910: Eckert Farm.

<sup>113</sup> City Directory 1867-1868: L. Fritz.

<sup>114</sup> *ibid*, Whitty, 1906: Fritz Road.

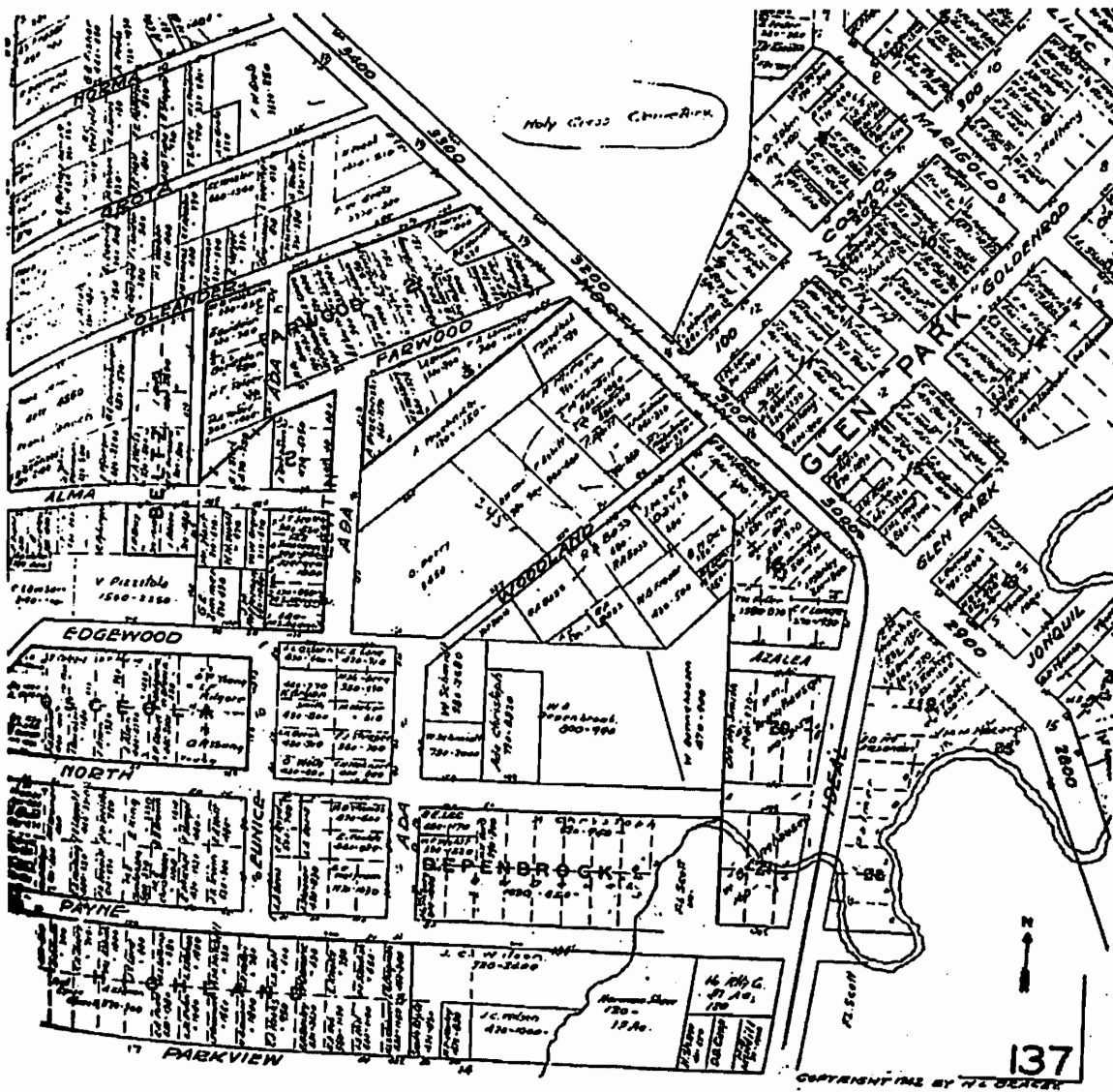
<sup>115</sup> First German Evangelical Lutheran Church Records; Ginger Daily family records.

Wedding Photo of Otto and Martha Windt: Otto Windt, born in 1881, was the son of German immigrants, Robert Windt and Mary Klunkert, and grew up just north of White Oak Bayou on his father's family farm there. He married Martha Feuchs in 1904, and the two moved to the Woodland Heights and started a family of four. By 1914 they became charter members of Zion Lutheran Church. Otto worked as a carpenter and built houses both in the Woodland Heights and River Oaks and became an accomplished craftsman. In 1923 he supervised the construction of a combination Parish Hall and parsonage for Zion Lutheran but in the late 1920's started a new way of life. He and Martha bought the Kuhlmann Grocery Store on the corner of Redan and Beauchamp and went into the grocery business. Martha, born in 1882, had grown up on a rural farm near today's FM 1960 and had little schooling available. Still, on her own she'd taught herself to read and write and calculate, which helped Otto greatly in the grocery store. The photo is courtesy of Ginger Daily, granddaughter of Otto and Martha





Germantown Images File B

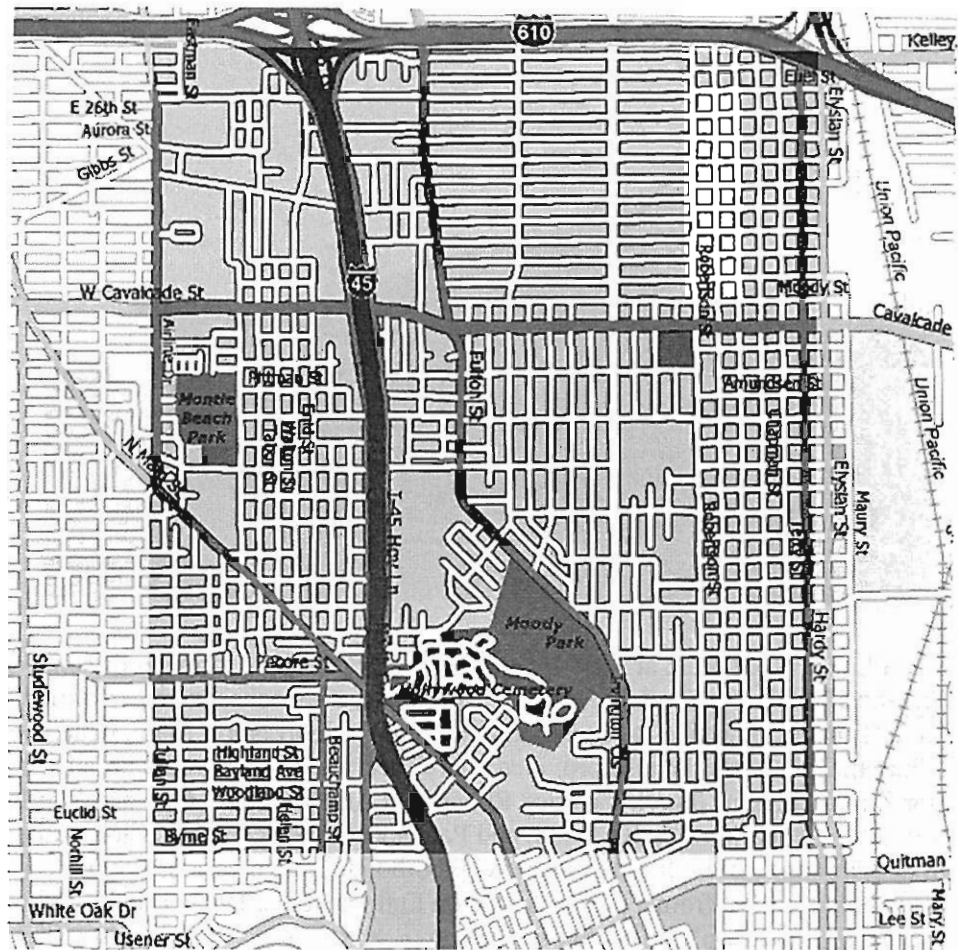


This was the Grotta Homestead in 1942, prior to its dismemberment by the Interstate 45 construction. The western boundary for the neighborhood is Houston Avenue (not shown). The map extends south to Parkview, which serves as the northern boundary for Woodland Park and defines the ownership of these areas of Houston in 1942. Note that the Grotas continue to have title to particular parts of the Homestead such as the eastern ends of Grotta and Oleander. The East-West street of Grotta was one of the streets that disappeared as a result of the construction. Note the name, DEPENDBROCK, among the others: The Dependbrocks had been a farming family in the area. The meandering stream crossing the map is Little White Oak Bayou. Source: Bracey's 1942, map is courtesy of the Houston Public Library's Metropolitan Research Center.





Germantown in a modern context: It was located less than two miles northwest of downtown Houston. During most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and several years after, the settlement of Germantown existed in the northeast quarter of the John Austin Grant from the Mexican Government. Its eastern boundary extended to the vicinity of Houston's current Hardy Toll Road; to the north, along a segment of the 610 Loop; to the west, along the alignment of Airline Drive and Julian Street; and to the south, roughly along the alignment of Byrne, Quitman, and Line Streets. One 1870 survey clearly indicated Little White Oak Bayou (not shown on this map) crisscrossing where today's Interstate 45 now runs from White Oak Bayou north to Loop 610. However, the Harris County Appraisal District currently applies the name of "Germantown" only to the Grota Homestead, which is an area bounded to the north and west by North Main and Houston Avenue. The map is courtesy of Mapquest



This photo is dated from about 1905 with Robert Windt in the middle and he is flanked by two of his sons. Robert's parents were both German immigrants who lived in the White Oak Bayou area. The Windts were avid fishermen. Robert was tragically widowed twice, to his neighbors, Mary and Emma Klunkert, then married a third time, to Amelia (nee Bortz). Eventually, Robert and Amelia moved into the Germantown area. Together with Amelia, Robert helped to found Zion Lutheran Church. With his sons, Robert also helped to construct the Woodland Heights, a historical neighborhood now located in Houston. The photo is courtesy of Ginger Daily, a descendant of Robert and Otto Windt



Zion Lutheran Church, at 3600 Beauchamp Street, became formally organized on December 11, 1914. It was the third Lutheran church in Houston. Missionary outreaches were performed through Zion Lutheran Church at 28<sup>th</sup> and Studewood (1915) and in the Fifth Ward, off North Main, which became Northside Lutheran Church. Zion Lutheran also provided church services through radio broadcasts during the 1930s. The founders for Zion Lutheran Church included Robert and Amelia Windt, Otto and Martha Windt, Emelia Feuchs, Augusta Frank, Fred and Matilda Krimmel, and Paul and Annie Schurman. Zion Lutheran continues to serve its spiritual community as well as the local neighborhood through various programs such as the child care program. This image comes from a postcard of Zion Lutheran circa 1945. Thanks to Ginger Daily for the image saved from Zion Lutheran's postcard distribution.



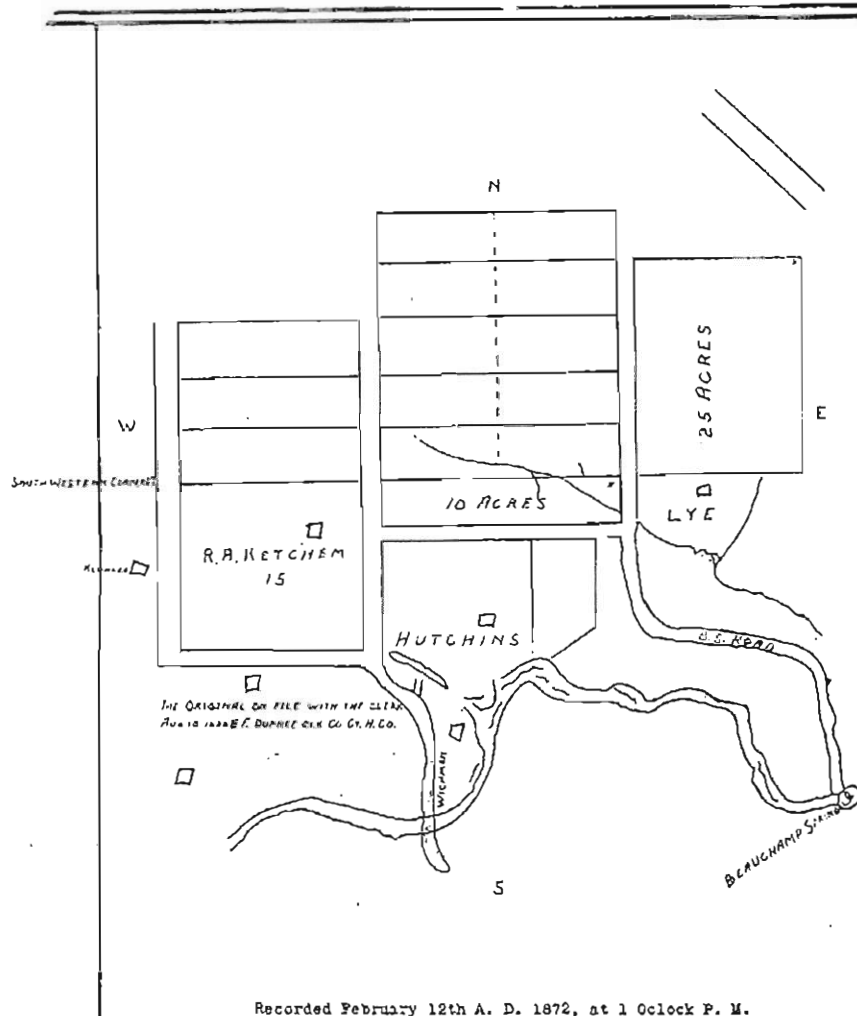
Mary Klunkert's parents, Ernst and Wilhelmina, built the house at 2911 Julian at around 1875. Mary was born in March 1859. She married her neighbor, Robert Windt, gave birth to Wilhelm Ernst Windt (born in 1879) and Otto Edward Windt (born 1881), but died in childbirth in 1883. The Klunkert family, a German family, was first listed in the City Directories as early as 1867. The Klunkert farmland is now known as the Ridgemont subdivision, located on the western edge of the Woodland Heights. This photo of Mary Klunkert was taken around 1878. Photo courtesy of Ginger Daily, descendant of both Mary Klunkert and Robert Windt.







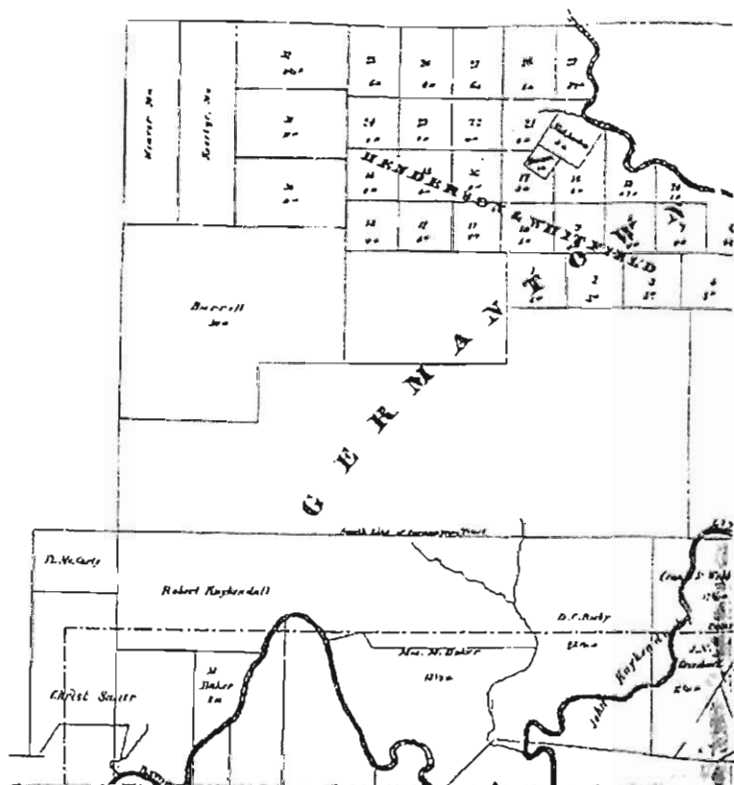




Mr. Ketcham (or Ketchum) tried to promote his land as a subdivision in 1866, when he had it platted as Ketcham's Addition. His land covered the southern part of Germantown and some of the White Oak Bayou area. Unfortunately for Mr. Ketcham, nothing came of his plans, so he sold much of his land in 1872. The value of this map is that it shows the Klunker (sic), that is Klunkert, land in 1872, as well as that of several other farmers. A southerly road that appeared to have crossed White Oak Bayou was labeled Wichman. This corresponds to another map from 1869 which which showed the name, C. Wickeman, about the same area. Additionally, the 1880 Census included a listing for a road called Wickeman, located "Beyond Beauchamp Springs". Note that an unnamed road is running diagonally in the northeast. That road is probably Montgomery Road. Source: Harris County Deeds: Volume 10, pages 266-268.

The Klunkert Farmhouse is located at 2911 Julian Street in Houston and was apparently built in 1875 (based on tax records). Ernst and Wilhemina Klunkert immigrated from Germany in 1854 and were located in the Houston area since at least 1867. Later, the eldest daughter, Mary Klunkert, married a neighbor, Robert Windt, from another German family and had two children. She died during her third childbirth, so Robert married her sister, Emma, who then had two children, and then she also died during her third childbirth. The Klunkert name appeared on the maps as early as 1869. However, in 1906, Wilhelmina, a widow, sold the land to Fred William Allen (Harris County Deeds: 188, p. 252). Photo by the author and with permission from Robert Mott and Linda Nations, current owners of 2911 Julian, the Klunkert House.





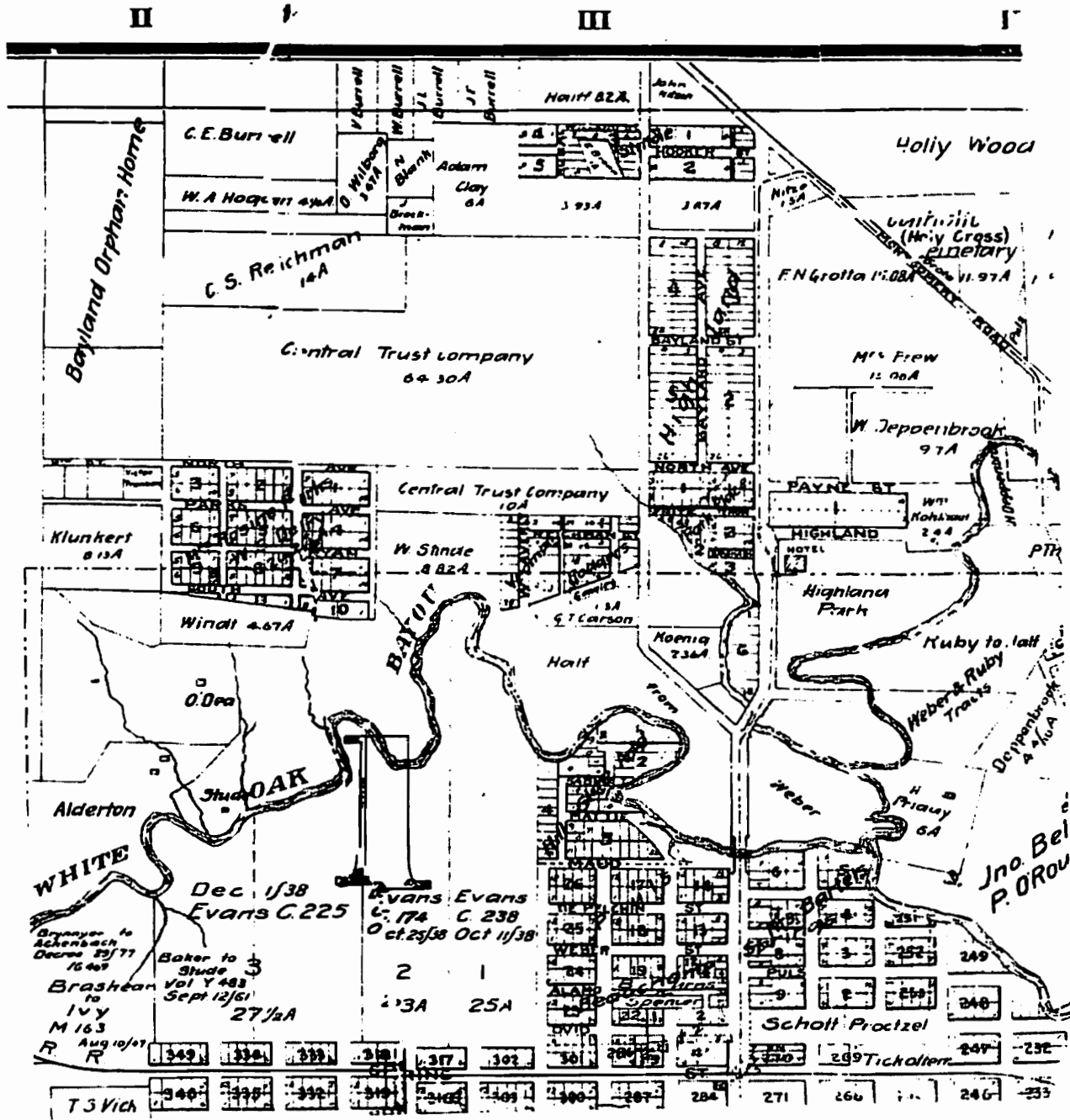
This was the western part of German town in 1890. Little White Oak Bayou meandered through the southwestern part of this segment of the overall map. At lot #11 in the Henderson & Whitfield survey, Old Montgomery Road crossed diagonally from the southeast to the northwest through and beyond that lot. The Henderson & Whitfield Survey was patched into the overall survey of German town (Griffin's block system is not shown here) though the numbering systems did not correspond to each other. To the west, Florence McCarty had already sold his land over twenty years earlier to Ernst Klunkert. The northern boundary for the City of Houston was marked by a dashed and dotted line whereas the southern boundary for German town was located above and as a solid line labeled, "South Line of German town Tract." Map: Porter, Pollard, & Ruby, 1890, courtesy of the Houston Public Library's Metropolitan Resource Center.



This is the inside of the Windt Grocery Store, located on Beauchamp Street and Redan in 1937. Pictured are a pair of grandsons of Robert Windt: On the left is Bob Windt, and Lawrence Windt is standing on the right side of the picture. Otto and Martha Windt originally purchased the store during the late 1920s from Carl Kuhlman. Photo is courtesy of Ginger Daily.



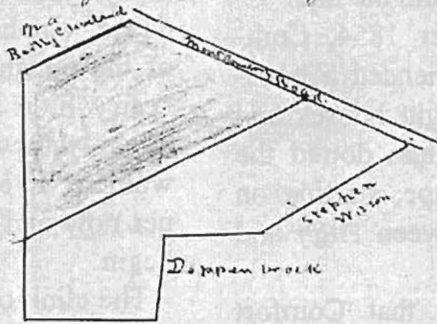




White Oak Bayou in 1906: The Klunkert farmland had just been sold and would eventually become the Ridgemont development. Robert Windt would soon sell his land and move north to Beauchamp at Pecore. Mrs. O'Dea had already sold her land to Otto Eckert twenty years before. The farmlands of the Windts, Deppenbrocks, Grotta/Drews, Koenigs, Studes, and Webers are illustrated in this map. This map is courtesy of the Houston Public Library's Metropolitan Resource Center. Source: P. Whitty, 1906.



at a stake on the west line of the Grota homestead from which a pole 8" in dia. with a bears N.  $48\frac{1}{2}$  E. 44 feet. Thence North 1162 feet along said West line to a spike, being the s.w. corner of a survey of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres more or less previously sold to Bartley Cleveland Thence N.  $66^{\circ}$  E. 378 feet along the s.e. line of Cleveland's survey to his s.e. corner, stake on the Montgomery road; Thence S.  $48\frac{1}{2}$  E. 752 feet along the s.w. side of said road to a stake being the n.e. corner of my half of the Grota homestead. Thence South westerly along the dividing line of the Grota homestead to the place of beginning - This deed is made only for partition.



To have and to hold, the above described premises, with all and singular the rights and appurtenances thereto in any wise belonging unto the said F. W. Grota, his heirs or assigns forever. And I do hereby bind myself, my heirs, executors and administrators to maintain and forever defend all and singular, the said premises unto the said F. W. Grota, his heirs and assigns, against every person whomsoever lawfully claiming or to claim the same or any part thereof. Witness my hand this 15<sup>th</sup> day of August 1891. Louise Drew  
 The State of Texas County of Harris: Before me, J. J. Gillespie, a Notary Public, in and for Harris County, Texas on this day personally appeared Mrs. Louisa Drew, widow, known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument of writing and acknowledged to me that she executed the same for the purposes and considerations therein expressed. Given under my hand and Seal of Office at Houston, the 15<sup>th</sup> day of August

William Grota willed his land, already referred to as the Grota Homestead, in 1891, to his son, F. W. Grota and to Mrs. Louisa Drew, his daughter. The Grota Homestead was a part of Germantown that was directly to the east of the Woodland Heights. William Grota and William Puls began purchasing this land in 1858 and continued buying land for several years afterwards. Eventually, only the Grota name was associated with the land. The homestead was split evenly between the two children with the northern 15.08 acres going to F. W. Grota and the lower 15.08 acres going to Louisa Drew. Note that Montgomery Road (later North Main) is crossing to the northeast. Additionally, the Stephen Wilson and Deppenbrock lands were shown to the southeast of the Grota Homestead. Source: Harris County Deeds: Volume 56, pages 537-538.

END

## Christmas in Comfort, The Very First One

By Anne Stewart, *Comfort Connection*, Dec 2008 Issue

Comfort was founded in the summer of 1854 by a twenty-two year old man, Ernst Hermann Altgelt.

For a German immigrant used to the civilization of Europe, who was familiar with cities as different as Munich, Berlin and London, the sheer space of the Texas frontier was both astounding and unsettling.

Altgelt lost no time in setting up a village. He named it Comfort, because "there wasn't any" at that time.

He advertised his new town in the New Braunfels newspaper saying, "Come to my town, come to Comfort. Here you can be your own man. I have given you a new town. You must develop it."

The advertisement drew young single men from New Braunfels, San Antonio and other German towns. They flocked into Comfort, looked around and declared, "Things could not be any better."

They set up tents, constructed lean-to shelters and began making shingles from the cypress trees.

The two mercantile stores, Mr. Altgelts and the Goldbeck Brothers, ordered merchandise

for the inhabitants: hard candy, liquor, lanterns, matches, cards, pencils and the like.

By December 1854, Comfort had experienced a housing boom: eight houses and numerous shelters dotted the town's landscape, starting on 7th Street between High and Main.

It was here that Comfort residents celebrated their first Christmas.

In the middle of 7th Street, in front of Fritz and Theodore Goldbeck's log cabin (presently owned by August Faltin) the merriment began.

The shingle makers were dressed in their very best party garb. "Everyone was wearing polished shoes." Their shirts were blue and white cotton and their pants were brown or blue heavy denim or ducking-like material.

Tables were set up for cards. One special table held a keg of liquid refreshment. The moon was full and "there were only cheerful people about."

Hermann Schimmelpfennig appeared with his violin and clarinet, ready to play for the dancers.

"Unfortunately there is still a shortage of women, so many a time man and man will dance together." The owners of the polished shoes had to "carry little ribbons on their arms – that way they posed as women." Everyone had a partner now and the dance could begin.

The clink of glasses and the sound of "barley juice" being poured can be heard. A fire was lit. "A huge bonfire out of wood and shingle sawdust," of which there was plenty, provided warmth and light for the party.

The residents danced to the music of Herr Schimmelpfennig, passed around refreshments and finally wandered home by the light of the morning star.

Froliche Weinachten, Merry Christmas in Comfort.

*Excerpted from Comfort in 1904 by Professor Ferdinand H. Lohmann, with additional holiday celebration garnered from oral interviews, beginning in 1978.*

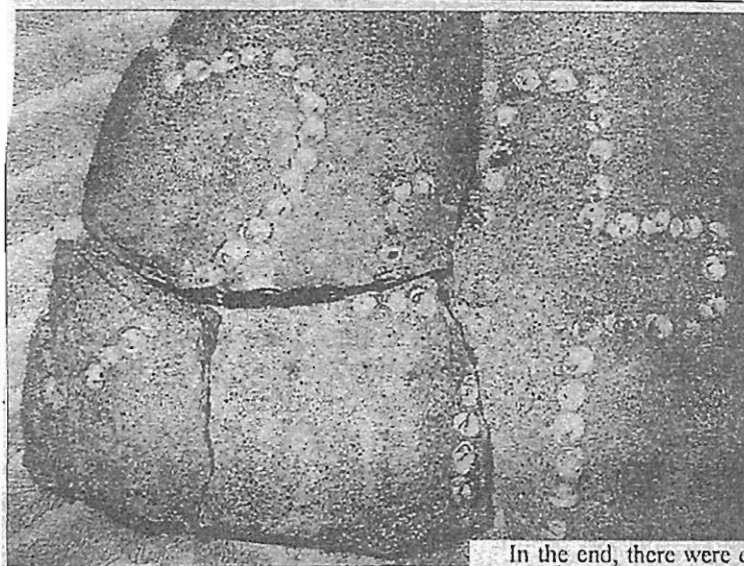
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### Snail shells in the Comfort Cemetery...

By Anne Stewart



Snail shells as grave adornment in the Comfort Cemetery, Photo by Mike Stewart

Sea shells used on grave sites in both the Comfort and San Jose cemeteries, as well as the Brownsboro Cemetery, while not a common funerary item were used for a number of years. Snail shells are an entirely different matter.

Discarded mortar fragments seen in the cemetery were retrieved when a local individual saw what looked to be the partial shape of an embedded cross. Upon closer examination, there appeared to be a number of broken pieces from a grave cover. Intent on saving Comfort funerary traditions, the person investigated further.

In the end, there were enough of the shattered pieces to fill a shoebox. What made these pieces unique were they held traces of shell decorations: snail shells! This is the first in our community cemetery.

While not complete, when placed together, the mortar fragments form a slightly rounded piece, about 10 inches by 8 inches. On the underside of the mortar pieces is a dark brown residue of some sort. Perhaps the unflawed roundness was achieved by placing the mortar over an iron pipe or corner fencepost. If so, it looks as if it had to be a metal object at least four inches in diameter.

You can tell that care was taken to smooth the concave top. Tiny snail shells were placed in the wet mortar in the shape of a cross and a heart. Further piecing reveals that were at least three crosses and two heart shapes. These beautiful, carefully formed images touch the heart. Whether they were on an infant's grave or the final resting place of an older person is not known. It certainly reflected the family's love and sadness about the deceased.

There are some but very few spaces in the design indicating that a shell came out of the mortar. These common garden variety snail shells are about 1/8 - 1/4 inch in size. All except three are broken. The same problem exists with the larger seashells. Whether the seashell came from the Texas coast or freshwater shells collected in a local streambed, all suffer damage from the weather and wildlife. These minuscule snail shells underwent the same environmental hazards: hail storms, armadillos, deer, the occasional horse or cow lost and looking for home, a heavy vase accidentally dropped. There are any number of causes of damage to shell funerary decor.

I cannot image how long it took to collect these tiny shells. Once collected, was a tweezers used to drop each shell into the design?

Neither name nor initials are on any of the remaining mortar pieces. These artifacts were donated to the Comfort Heritage Foundation Archives. Come in some Tuesday to see them. This is indeed a first in the Comfort Cemetery.

Resources: 1. Dorothy Britt, *Comfort author and artist, discussion with the author about freshwater shell, 1987.* 2. *Texas Graveyards* by Terry G. Jordan. 3. *Comfort's Historic Cemeteries*. Unpublished manuscript by Anne Stewart. 4. "The Decoration of Graves in Central Texas' with Seashells" by Sara Clark.

END

put together, much like a three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle. Two crosses and two heart shapes stood out against the sand colored mortar. A ring of the snail shells encircled the top of the vase. It stands about eight inches high and six inches wide. It was handmade to place on a grave of a loved one. It was designed to hold floral bouquets. Stop by the Archives any Tuesday between 9:00 and Noon and see this piece of Comfort's cultural heritage.

END

The Comfort News, August 7, 2008

Submitted by Anne Stewart, The Comfort News, April 2, 2008

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### Snail Shells in the Comfort Cemetery: Question Answered!

By Anne Stewart

This past April The Comfort News ran the original article about the unique find in the Comfort Cemetery discard pile. Someone had rescued shards from a discard pile. There was a shoebox of mortar and snail shell designs left on our side porch accompanied by a note: "For the archives."

A local resident retrieved the fragments when it became apparent that a design was imbedded in the mortar. We took it the box to the archives on the following Tuesday morning. Archive

volunteers and visiting researchers and genealogists all looked at, handled the various pieces and took a guess. Some of the pieces were concave in shape. Others were flat. One piece appears to have a circular design on the bottom. There was no name or initials or date inscribed in the mortar.

Was this meant for a child or an infant's grave? The snail shells were so tiny and the designs so carefully made, were these parts of a grave cover? The shells had to have been dropped into place with tweezers. The shards sat in the shoebox for a while.

Lo and behold, after being gone a week or so, we walked into the Archives and there sat a small funerary vase. The fragments had been carefully



## The German-Americans of Dallas, Texas

By Alexander M. Troup

The History of the German people in Dallas is an obscure subject for the 21st Century, while in many parts of Texas today, there are landmarks, families and communities that still exist and continue some form of ethnic cultural events as playing roles in preserving such a European Heritage. The subject of German immigration arises in Dallas, around the 1850's, and especially around the early 1870's.

Dallas would become a major center in maintaining two steam railroads, which would bring about the European immigrants' passage to this area. The most popular railroad line would be the Union Central and Pacific, just north of town, in an area called "Deep Ellum" today. And, with the early entry in the 1870's of such a line into the town, many of the immigrants were of the German-speaking race. The Elm Street, or "Deep Ellum" area, would then become a staging area for these people to live in, where they would then branch out in the various parts of Dallas to create the late-1870's communities..

This early East Dallas area along with downtown, to the south, and north of town, would hold a much more structured labor force, where families would create the 19th Century Texas European business atmosphere, in stores, saloons, bakeries, breweries, clothing and hat shops, etc. West Dallas and Oak Cliff would also serve as German enclaves, while their presence in the 20th Century would become almost lost or forgotten after World War 1.

October the first, 1873, is a date when the Turnverein came into existence as the first German society to be formed in Dallas. It would open its doors at 1020 Commerce Street. The boom of immigrants, who came via the railroad, would be served, thus providing a unique entry for many of the immigrants' stay to help stabilize such a community.

### Lodges, Societies and Their Development.

Very early on, the German society and Jewish societies of aid stood side by side in Dallas, to create and help their race of Germanic-speaking peoples, who were foreign and ignorant of American culture and life. They helped the immigrant to adapt and learn the benefits of becoming a part of a complex, and yet, simple, way of life in the 19th Century. These various lodges and societies of the 19th Century would provide a background of interest in insurance, child care, education, music, art, bowling and gymnastics, and celebrations that had, or held, German ritual to romance, to celebrate from, and would continue into the 20th Century.

### Sons of Hermann Founding Dates

Uhland Lodge #22 of the Hermann Sohne 1890) (November 3,  
 Columbian Lodge #66 (founded February 19, 1893)  
 Fortuna lodge #119 (July 4, 1894)  
 Germania Lodge organization) #5 (November 30, 1896) (Insurance organization  
 Turn Verein (October 27, 1873)  
 Dallas Turn Verein Bowling Club (January 17, 1901)  
 Sisters of the Sons of Hermann  
 Frohsinn of Dallas (1877)  
 German Aid Society (October 3, 1886)  
 German Veterans Association (1896)  
 Gruetli Verein of Dallas (Swiss society) (January 1, 1874)  
 Verein Deutscher Waffengenosen (1890s)  
 Sisters of Swiss Immigrants  
 Teutonia Lodge of the Knights of Honor, 1873  
 O. D. H.  
 K. of H.  
 German American Ladies Aid Society (1884)  
 (Source: *Worley's Dallas Directory 1907, p. 973*)



Today, in Dallas, Texas, in 2007, the Sons of Hermann Hall would serve as one of the few remaining landmarks in the city that has, more or less, re-invented itself into the 21st Century. Then, installed officers were among the ranks of prominent men of Dallas County, whose German background espoused firm leadership. Men such as C. F. Altermann, Grand President; August Muller, who ran a beer brewery in Dallas; Ben Fabian as Grand Guide. Impressive ceremonies were held to induct these individuals into office. Concluding these events was typically a banquet tended by the ladies of the Germania Lodge, addresses delivered by C. F. Altermann, Henry Nuss, bookbinder and the Frohsinn Singing Society.

These events would then establish a following for future gatherings and support for the German-Americans in Dallas, in the coming years. Some events took place in Fort Worth, where C. W. Heppner would attend at Hermann Park, with a luncheon being served by the Texas Brewing Company with 100 people attending in 1910. 1905 to 1909 was a significant time period for such a group of people to have such an influence in Dallas. After the Second World War, their presence in Dallas would be almost non-existent, or a shadow of an obscure element of a German-American people, who were now part of a general public.

### **Sons of Hermann in the Very Beginning**

It is difficult to say exactly when the Sons of Hermann came into existence in Dallas, Texas. Various other lodges and members' societies were well-established groups. Nov. 3, 1890, seems to be a transition for these other groups then, to accept the question of such a society as the Sons of Hermann.

Dallas, Texas, in the 1890's, was a unique multi-cultural city, transforming into a modern metropolis by the 1900's, forcing German societies to become more in tune with becoming an American-German institution. The State of Texas would charter their lodges and societies, recognizing them as important institutions of intellectual influences.

During the 1890's, the Sons of Hermann, with their families and friends, would unite at Turner Hall, to install officers of several lodges for the beginning of the new year. The Dallas Frohsinn, a singing section of the Turn Verein, organized in 1877, would combine their fraternal instincts with several other societies and clubs, to a final meeting ground, in 1910 and 1911, at the Elm Street site, along with Sons of Hermann.

Prior to that, Turner Hall would provide a short-term space for these various groups, becoming too small for the growing lodges and its various families, who would bring in a group of 4 to 8 children per family, in some cases. This location was on Harwood Street, while the original 1873 structure was located at 1020 Commerce St. -- where German school education was also conducted in the 1890's, and later, at the Harwood St. location. The consolidation of the various lodges united the German - Americans, while the old Turner Hall would be recognized as a relic of the past, by 1908.

Various recorded land records for Dallas County suggest the present location on Elm Street, for the Sons of Hermann, and date back to 1884 and 1888. C. W. Heppner, a visionary, may have been an instigator to rally the various groups of people, to gather and form an alliance among all German societies and groups, by 1910. The Sons of Hermann story, folklore and myth, has a history of heroic essence.

The order is benevolent and fraternal; it is named from Hermann, or Arminus, which, in historical contexts, refers to having aided the Romans, who were believed to have come to teach the Germans in their native field and wald. And, when the German leader saw his people oppressed, he organized them, and in the German forest, destroyed a large part of the army of Varus, the Roman. He lived and worked in the period, from B. C. 18, to A. D. 19, and from this record, the benevolent and patriotic order takes its name and teachings.

Hermann is realized as the patron saint, stretching the arm of protection over a German woman.

### **BUY SITE FOR LODGE BUILDING.**

#### **Sons of Hermann and Auxiliary Plan Three-Story Building at Main and Exposition.**

“Three Dallas lodges of Sons of Hermann, and the one lodge of Sisters of the Sons of Hermann, have united in the movement to erect a lodge and club house for the organizations. Property, with fifty feet front on Main and Elm streets, opposite Exposition Avenue, was bought yesterday afternoon →



from Edward Bernier, by the Sons of Hermann Home, for a consideration of about \$5,000. There is a small business house on the Main street end of the lot, which has a depth of 200 feet.

The plan of the organization is to erect a structure of brick and stone, three stories in height, covering the entire lot. The first floors will be for business houses; the second, possibly for offices, and the third, for the lodges. The house is to be planned by architects, who are members of the lodges. It is to cost, finished and furnished, about \$20,000.

The officers of the Sons of Hermann Home, the building concern that has obtained a charter from the State, are: C. W. Heppner, president; Edward Bernier, vice president; H. W. Brack, secretary; Hermann Ebert, treasurer.

Lodges concerned are Columbian Lodge No. 66, Fortuna Lodge No. 119, and Uhland Lodge No. 22, Sons of Hermann, and Germania Lodge No.5, Sisters of the Sons of Hermann."

- August 7, 1910, *The Dallas Morning News*

Thus, the Sons of Hermann building was born. A small business house on main Street stood there at the end of the lot, then, as it still stands today, bearing a sweet reminder that the 19th and 20th Centuries have now come into the 21st as some unique tribute to maintaining some kind of "Inner City Heritage." This small building now adjoining the bowling alley, may have been a meeting house for a smaller group of German people to meet in the mid-to-late 1880's and 1890's. The cost of the lodge building then at around \$20,000 in 1910 would be some \$170,000 today.

C. W. Heppner acting as president and leader for the organization, obtained a charter from the State of Texas creating the society in 1910. A temporary two-story frame structure, designed by William Martens to house the various groups became a fireproof structure erected by 1911 at 412 Elm Street. Swiss Hall, on Cabell and Preston St., south of Dallas, would still remain a home for various other societies until the lodge building was finished. An open house for the Sons of Hermann took place on April 3, 1911.

World War I would come at such a time, forcing the future construction of the 3-story building to be delayed, and finally abandoned, by 1920, after the war. The area gradually became a warehouse and industrial district.

Starting in 1920 and increasing into the 1930s, Deep Ellum, as the area became known, was a prime jazz and blues hotspot in the South, the empty warehouses attracting various artists to the cheap loft space that was available.

### Swiss Avenue and Deep Ellum in the Late 20th Century

Sometime beginning in 1982, I was working in the old Swiss Avenue area of East Dallas, for about 8 years, in historical and archaeological recovery, preservation, and to save what would be ruined or destroyed during the massive clean-up and re-development in the area, that was beginning and is realized today.

Around this time period, a 19th Century home, with a Victorian front porch, was being torn down for a parking lot, for the Meadows Foundation of Dallas, exposing the attic and side of the house, where the contents of a German family would lay in a sort of time capsule of dust and old wallpaper.

Among the many artifacts and items left behind, were issues of the Nord Texas Presse, a semi-weekly German newspaper for the Southwest, located on 341-343 Elm St. These items would stand out in such a way, as to expose the kind of people and population Dallas would have at the time, around the early 1900's.

How the German-American community came to exist in the area, in the first place, is due to early Swiss immigrants, who came to the area in the late 1850's, and the various developments and additions that were later built during the railroad boom of the 1870's, which came to exist as the center of the old Swiss and German town of Dallas.

The effects of the Texas Street home would provide a rare example on how such a community had existed, on up into the 1920's, where its decline would come as the first World War came to an end. Prohibition would afford another mark in decline.

Other landmarks torn down over the course of the next 20 years would provide a short glimpse of what Dallas had become with such an industrious community of people.

Honest Joe's Pawn Shop, another landmark, renovated and then abandoned, was located on Elm Street, as a two-story store front, where, in the mid-1900's, the building was an old hotel that had the second floor and windows boarded up, since the 'teens of the first two decades. This was another unique time capsule—a racing and gambling hall, target practice room, living quarters to serve as a →



hideout, and a drop point for men who would work at the various Ford plants in Detroit, and in Dallas, and throughout the country.

The discovery of this took place in 1992, while, by 1994, most, or all of the items or articles from the various rooms would be gone forever. The contents of the Honest Joe's Pawn Shop second floor had remained in such a condition of isolation for the outside world, becoming an interesting story to come to light.

Letters sent to Dallas from the Detroit Ford plant, from 1915 to 1917, addressed to German male occupants of the building, or sent to a nearby post office were found. While many of the German newspapers were from Dallas, other issues were from around the country and state, having much to do with the beginnings of the first world war. The hundreds of other newspapers from around the country in American script, once held their contents -- all clipped out -- that indicated a study of the economy, inventions, development in air and military power strength, that had taken place in the 1917 to 1919 era.

This rare discovery shed light on the last 10 years of significant interest in dealing with an old, and almost forgotten, community of German-American people. The owner of the Honest Joe's Pawn Shop allowed me the contents from this room, since he was in the process of renovation, and the old newspapers were soon to go into the trash. They have been in my care ever since, and with great concern and expense, to store and preserve

Again 1982, as I would venture from Fair Park at the Dallas Opera, where I would work in stage and lighting, along with sets, the road home was Elm Street, where it would begin on the grid towards downtown. Driving along Elm, I would notice an old haunted-looking building of two stories, with an odd platform on the roof. Facing out, an old baked-on enamel, neon sign, dirty with soot, dust and dirt, and one light on, "Hermann", which held an eerie effect that evening, I would later go back in the daytime to visit the House of Munsters, I thought, which later on, I would realize, was the Sons of Hermann Hall.

The entrance to the front door opened as a creaky noise, confusion to realize it was a club, of sorts, where an old Wild West bar held some sort of great presence as a linoleum black and white floor stretched out to hold the old room in place, where chairs and tables were arranged in some sort of well-preserved placement since the 1940's.

German cards and signs were thumb-tacked on the old barback, where several well-preserved German bartenders asked me if I was a member. I said "no," and they served me beer, anyway.

Over the course of the next five years, I would stop by, and later moved a friend, Jim Brisim, known as the "Singing Tree Man," from San Antonio, into the bowling alley, which, at the time, served as his living quarters.

*During the 1990's, various rock, soul and country music groups, with national attraction, would also perform at the "Sons", while the Frohsinns and the Columbian Lodges would expand their membership during this unique rebirth.*

*Today, the Sons of Hermann is still a grand hall, in use and in unique preservation; in 1999, they held their 95th anniversary. The Sons of Hermann Hall is a private lodge building jointly owned by Texas Sons of Hermann Dallas Lodge 22 and Columbia Lodge 66. The Sons of Hermann Hall is staffed entirely by unpaid member volunteers (editor's note)*

**Submitted by Alexander Troup, Dallas**

**END**

## Early Community Called Itself Wursten, Texas

Where in the World Was Wursten:

By Carolyn Heinsohn

Fayette County Historical Commission

Many of our small communities have virtually disappeared off the maps; however, Wursten seems to have also disappeared from the memories of almost everyone except a few local historians.

Located in southwest Fayette County, a mile north of Blum Hill and six tenths of a mile south of Oldenburg (not the community east of La Grange), Wursten got its name from the unusually good sausages made by the local Anders Meat Market. Wursten is derived from the German word for sausage.

Wursten was the first settlement in that area; however, when a post office was established there in 1858, the close communities were collectively re-named High Hill, so that the post office could serve the residents of all three villages. Morris Richter was the first post-master.

The public road connecting three settlements was believed to be the old stage road from Victoria to La Grange and points further north. Businesses located along this north to south route included a mercantile store, drug store, hotel, shoe shop, meat market, hardware store, tin shop, cotton buying office, two grocery stores, two saloons, two blacksmith shops, a doctor's office, and an old style cotton gin and grist mill located east of Wursten on the banks of Forster's Creek.

There was another road south of Wursten, known as the "Old Spanish Trail" or the Columbus Road, which meandered in an east to west direction, bordering the northern edge of Blum Hill, also known as Old High Hill. Since this was the main road and major freight and mail route between San Antonio and Houston, more businesses were also built along this road.

Located about a tenth of a mile southeast of Wursten, one of the first beer breweries in Texas was constructed, and operated by Adolf and August Richter. When the railroad came through the nearby town of Schulenburg bringing ice cold beer to the local residents, the Richter brothers discontinued the brewing of beer and began to devote their time to making and selling yeast, for which there was a great demand when homemade bread was part of the daily diet.

Apparently when the brewery was still operating, the residue from preparing the brew was dumped in the pastures where roaming hogs would in turn run across the "delicious" heaps of fermented residue. Of course, being "pigs," they over-indulged and became a bit "tipsy." When they tried to walk, they would fall down on one side, grunt, get up, walk a bit more, fall down on the other side and grunt some more, providing the locals with a comical show.

A short distance southeast of the brewery was a hall called "Die Turner Halle" (gymnastic hall), where dances and picnics were held occasionally. The hall

eventually was torn down, and the materials were used to build two local homes.

The early settlers of Wursten, some of whom arrived as early as 1844, included the Yungbeckers, Heinrichs, Seydlers, Anders, Schmidts, Demels, Siems, Kuiglers, Dueringers, Winklers, Richters, Eschenburgs, Nordhausens, Seidels and Wellhausens. The Joseph Heinrich family arrived in 1860 along with several other German-Moravian families from the Catholic parish of Neudeck in the Neutitschein district of northern Moravia, which was in the Empire of Austria at that time. The other German-Moravian families settled in the Oldenburg and Blum Hill areas of High Hill.

When the three villages became High Hill, the name Wursten slowly faded away. When High Hill was bypassed by the railroad extending westward from Alleyton to San Antonio in 1873, it too slowly disappeared as businesses moved to Schulenburg, which developed with the coming of the railroad.

Although nothing is left of Wursten, it was a busy place in the mid-19th century with a great deal of history, much of which is incorporated in the story of High Hill, which has enough history for several more stories.

(Source: The High Hill Centennial History - Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of St. Mary's Parish; published by The Schulenburg Sticker, 1960)

Submitted by Rodney Koenig, Houston

Fayette County Record, July 18, 2008

END



# Schmecken Time in La Grange

*Square Hosts Santa and 'Tasting Party' on Thursday Evening*

*Fayette County Record, December 2, 2008*

Downtown La Grange and the courthouse square will be all ready for Schmeckenfest Thursday, thanks to Robbie Gronewald and other volunteers who have created a wonderland on the courthouse lawn. Help came from Second Baptist Church and from the Fayette County Genealogy Society, but some of her best help came from her grandchildren, Haley, 6, and Nick, 12, who were here from Kingsland. Gronewald has been heading up the decoration effort ever since 1998, when she chaired the promotions committee for Main Street La Grange.

Say it in German: *Jawohl, das schmeckt gut!*, or say it in English: *Yes, indeed, that tastes good!*"

It's the same difference and it's all good at the *Schmeckenfest* (Tasting Party) Thursday, Dec. 4 on the courthouse square in La Grange. The fun begins at 4:30 p.m.

This is the second year that La Grange Main Street will kick off the Christmas season with the family-friendly Schmeckenfest. Merchants will be open late and serving their own versions of Wassail, a traditional holiday drink. Shoppers can stroll from store to store, tasting them all and then vote on their favorite. Mark Ulrich, head Wassail maker at National Bank & Trust, won last year's vote, giving him the title of *Schmeckenmeister for 2007*.

Christmas requires more than Wassail, though; it also needs Santa Claus, or Kris Kringle as the Germans would put it. Santa will officially be welcomed to La Grange by Mayor Janet Moberge at 5 p.m., when they will officially light the Christmas tree and turn on the courthouse lights.

One of Santa's elves will be coming, too, riding on Ralph Fisher's photogenic white Longhorn steer, to the delight of the kids. Afterwards, Santa will be in the gazebo to greet the children and listen to their Christmas wishes.

Activities will begin Thursday with a 4:30 p.m. holiday concert in front of the courthouse by the La Grange High School band. The German Club dancers and Polka Band, choirs and musical groups will also be performing around the square. Other events the family won't want to miss are the Lad and Dad cake auction conducted by the Cub Scouts, notes of remembrance on the Remembrance Tree sponsored by the Genealogy Society, the Delta Epsilon Phi Christmas Carolers, the Fayette County Chorale and the Glory Tone Bell Ringers.

Let's not forget the *schmecken* part. Seventeen food booths will tickle your palate. They include -Seafood gumbo -Chili-Chicken soup - Sausage wraps -Tamales -Cookies - Sweets.

**Submitted by Rodney Koenig, Houston**

END

## Is It Written in German?



Lots of local residents have taken the Record with them to Germany. Kerstin and Ezard Blasche of Gera, Germany, instead came to Texas to read the Record. They came for a week's visit with Phil and Shirley Going of Round Top. The couples first met when the Goings were on a trip to Gera in 1998. It was the Blasches' second trip to Texas, but their first to Round Top.

*Fayette County Record, December 2, 2008*

END

## SAN ANTONIO'S GERMAN HERITAGE

by Terry L. Smart

San Antonio is one of the oldest and most historic cities in Texas. The area was first explored by the Spanish in the late 1600s, and a few years later they founded a town named to honor St. Anthony. San Antonio was not only a colonial settlement but also served as a frontier military post and as a center for missionary activities. Today the city attracts thousands of tourists each year: it is renowned for its Spanish past and for its close cultural ties to Mexico. Each year San Antonio observes *Diez y Seis de Septiembre* and *Cinco de Mayo*, two holidays commemorating Mexico's independence from Spain and Mexico's escape from French rule. And every spring, San Antonians of many ethnic backgrounds join together to enjoy *Fiesta*, a week of partying, parades and fun.

San Antonio also has a German heritage dating back to the nineteenth century, but it has been overshadowed and largely forgotten. Probably few visitors to San Antonio or few San Antonians themselves know how much Germans contributed to San Antonio. After Texas won independence from Mexico in 1836, Germans came to be the largest immigrant group in San Antonio. The city's German population once was larger than its native Spanish-speaking population. Germans contributed to the city's early cultural and economic development. They built homes and neighborhoods, they founded churches, they opened schools, and brought music and the arts to San Antonio. Germans were prominent in the professions, medicine, architecture, journalism, and engineering. The German community established businesses still in operation and provided leaders in banking, transportation, and commerce. Today these German contributions to San Antonio may be largely forgotten, but around the city there are still traces of a once strong German past.

A few street names in the old section of San Antonio, like Blum, Stieren and Stumberg, are reminders that once a German neighborhood was there. The German inscriptions in the stained-glass windows and on the cornerstone of St. Joseph's Catholic Church are reminders that the church was built in 1868 to be a "national parish" for German speakers. The first German Methodist Church in San Antonio was built in 1879 and is still in use. Commercial buildings, like the Menger Hotel or the Bonham Exchange, were erected by Germans, and many houses in the so-called King William Area were formerly the homes of prominent German residents. A dozen of San Antonio's parks are named for German families including the Bamberger, Pletz, Schnael and Strauss Families. Schools also bear German names. Elementary schools in five of San Antonio's largest public school districts are named to honor Germans. These family names include Brauchle, Galm, Graebner, Hoelscher, Huebner, Krueger, Schenk, Schulze, Stahl Steubing and others. There are more than fifty cemeteries in and around San Antonio, some of which were originally German family burial sites. Many German pioneers who contributed to the growth of nineteenth century San Antonio are interred at the Alamo Masonic Cemetery, the IOOF (International Order of Odd Fellows) Cemetery, Mission Burial Park and at other community cemeteries.

When the first German immigrants settled at San Antonio is uncertain, but it is clear that its German population increased rapidly from 1840. When Texas won its independence as a new republic in 1836, San Antonio was the largest town in Texas, but its population may have been little more than 800. After Texas independence, the town experienced a remarkable growth that continued to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861. Several factors account for this rapid population growth. One is the massive German immigration to Texas that began in the 1840s and was promoted in Europe by the *Adelsverein* (Society of German Nobles). Many ships sailing from Bremerhaven docked first at Galveston, and then colonists sailed along the Texas coast to Matagorda Bay where they ended their long Atlantic crossing at Karlshaven (later Indianola). From the coast, they traveled inland to New Braunfels or to Fredericksburg. San Antonio lay not far off the overland route these colonists followed, and as a long-established, large town, it attracted many of the German newcomers. Some colonists who settled at New Braunfels or Fredericksburg later "pulled up stakes" and moved to San Antonio, where economic opportunities were greater. By 1850, the number of German settlers at San Antonio reportedly ex- →



ceeded the city's Mexican population. San Antonio continued to experience a population boom after the Civil War ended in 1865. The number of Germans immigrating to San Antonio between 1865 and 1890 may have been twice as large as the number of Germans who settled at San Antonio before the Civil War. Railroads contributed to this population growth. The first passenger train reached San Antonio in 1877, after a new rail line connected it with Houston and with Galveston. After the Civil War, Galveston was still a major embarkation point for immigrants arriving from Europe. From 1877 on, immigrants who reached Galveston could travel inland by train to San Antonio rather than sailing from Galveston to Matagorda Bay and following the overland route inland that German colonists had taken in the 1840s. Furthermore, by 1880, other new rail lines stretched across North Texas, connecting San Antonio to cities in the Mid-West. This opened a new route to Texas and to San Antonio followed by immigrants from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Missouri and other states, many of whom were Germans seeking cheap land.

The 1879 San Antonio city directory reportedly listed 7,600 German residents and 7,800 Anglo-Americans. One scholar estimated that in 1880, at least one third of San Antonio's population was German. In 1890, the city's foreign-born population included more than 4,000 persons who were born in Germany and only 3,500 born in Mexico. According to an unsubstantiated story, so many Germans were employed by San Antonio's city government that an ordinance was passed requesting everyone to speak English while on the job so that Anglo-Americans could understand what was going on!

One of San Antonio's first German neighborhoods grew up along the San Antonio River near the present downtown. It was an area now bounded by the San Antonio River on the west and by Commerce Street and Alamo Street on the north and east. The neighborhood was so thoroughly German that Anglo-Americans nicknamed it "the Little Rhine" for the river in Germany. That "Little Rhine" neighborhood long ago disappeared, but there is still one reminder of its name. The "Little Rhine" Restaurant today is located on the banks of the river in the former German neighborhood.

Another German neighborhood grew up along the San Antonio River south of Durango Boulevard and west of Alamo Street. This was a more affluent area of large, beautiful homes built by German business leaders and professionals. It was known (and still is known) as the King William Area. The neighborhood reportedly was named for William (Wilhelm) I, King of Prussia, who became the first emperor of the German *Reich* established in 1871. The King William Area was located near a bend of the San Antonio River, and because the neighborhood was so thoroughly German, Anglo-Americans referred to the King William Area as "Sauerkraut Bend." Some of the nineteenth century German homes in the King William Area are still standing. They include a limestone house at 205 East Guenther Street built in 1860 by German immigrant Karl Hilmar Guenther, the founder of Pioneer Flour Mills. Another of the older houses is the Wulff Home, an Italianate style house begun in 1869 by Anton Wulff for his wife and eleven children. Wulff immigrated to Texas from Germany in 1848 and later was on the Board of Directors of San Antonio's first public utilities company. Edward Steves (who anglicized his German name) built an imposing house at 509 King William Street. Its limestone walls were thirteen inches thick, and the house had an indoor swimming pool. Ernst Altgelt, the founder of the German settlement at Comfort in Kendall County, moved to San Antonio in 1866. He surveyed the King William Area and reportedly gave the neighborhood its present name as well as naming its main street for Prussia's King William. Altgelt's house is at 226 King William Street. Other houses built by German immigrants on King William Street include the former home of Carl August Wilhelm Gross, a banker; the Sartor House built in 1881 by Alexander Sartor, owner of a jewelry business; and the Schulze House, erected in 1891 by Carl Schulze, one of San Antonio's leading craftsmen and home builders.

Germans were among San Antonio's business leaders and made important contributions to the early economic development of the city. In 1851, Johann Menger opened a soap-making "factory" at Laredo and Martin Streets. A short time later, Wilhelm Menger (no relation to Johann Menger) built the first commercial brewery in Texas. Menger also built the Menger Hotel adjacent to the Alamo. (Today it is San Antonio's oldest hotel.) In 1858, two brothers founded the D. and A. Oppenheimer Bank, originally located near the corner of Soledad and Commerce Streets. The bank continued operations until →

1988. Another private bank was established in 1874 by Karl Groos and his brothers. They were immigrants from the Kingdom of Saxony. In 1859, Karl Guenther moved from Fredericksburg to San Antonio and built San Antonio's first flour mill. Guenther's milling operation later grew to become Pioneer Flour Mills. Edward Steves immigrated to Texas from Germany in 1848. In 1866, he established a lumber business that rapidly expanded and in 1879 became Ed Steves and Sons. (His descendents today carry on family businesses.) W. L. Richter, the son of German immigrants, opened a bakery in 1882. His bakery became a family-owned business that for a century produced "Butter Krust Bread" and bakery products sold under the name "Colonial Cakes." Another German, William Gebhardt, founded his company in 1894, and opened a factory at South Frio and Commerce Streets to produce condiments sold with the brand name Eagle Chili Powder. These were but a few of the prominent business leaders who were part of San Antonio's German community.

Many of San Antonio's early Germans were tradesmen and shopkeepers. There also were skilled artisans, craftsmen, wheelwrights, blacksmiths, stonemasons and carpenters, whose skills were in demand. German carpenters brought to Texas a tradition that is still observed. When German carpenters finished the framing of a new building, they then attached to the highest beam on the roof a small tree or a limb cut from a tree. This was meant to be a signal for their supervisor that it was time for refreshments. (In the case of Germans, this meant beer.) This custom persists today. Construction crews often place a small tree or tree limb on the upper floor of a newly-completed building project, even a high-rise office building.

Some of San Antonio's Germans received a university education in Germany before immigrating to Texas. They were among the city's intellectuals, its architects, engineers, physicians, publishers, and writers. A few, like newspaper editor Karl Douai or journalist August Siemering, were "Forty-Eighters." The "Forty-Eighters" were educated, radical revolutionaries in Germany who fled to the United States after the German Revolution of 1848 failed. San Antonio's "Forty-Eighters" gravitated toward politics. They were outspoken in condemning slavery and secession, and they were solidly for preserving the Union. Their stand on these issues alarmed their Anglo-American neighbors, some of whom came to believe that all Germans were radical abolitionists and unionists. That was not true, but when Texas voted to leave the Union, a large bloc of votes was cast against secession by San Antonians. The vote favoring secession passed, but 46 percent of voters were opposed. Many of them were Germans.

German artists and musicians contributed to early San Antonio's cultural life. Carl Iwonski was an artist who moved from New Braunfels to San Antonio in 1858, where he worked as a portrait painter and taught art at the German-English School. He and fellow artist Karl Lungkwitz opened a photography studio in San Antonio. Lungkwitz studied at the Royal Academy of Art at Dresden before immigrating to Texas in 1851. His works included drawings and paintings of Hill Country landscapes. Ira Hadra (nee Weisselberg) was one of Lungkwitz's pupils. She lived and worked in San Antonio as a portrait and landscape painter during the 1880s. Louise Wueste (nee Heuser) opened her portrait studio at San Antonio in 1860 and gave art lessons at the German-English School. She was an artist trained by the art institute at Dusseldorf in the Kingdom of Prussia. Johann Menger was a musician and composer who taught music at San Antonio. He founded a German men's choral society, the *Mannergesang Verein*, and directed its performances from 1847 to 1853. Wilhelm Thielepape was San Antonio's mayor from 1867 until 1872. Music was his avocation. Before immigrating to Texas, he composed piano music, and he continued to compose after settling at San Antonio. Thielepape helped organize the *Beethoven Mannerchor* in 1867 and was its director. The *Liederkrantz* was another German singing society. It originated in 1892 as the men's choir of St. Joseph's German Catholic Church. A few years later, it reorganized as a *Verein*. It presented concerts but continued as the choir of St. Joseph's. In the 1850s, the Casino Club (a German social club) built a theater in its clubhouse on Market Street, and in the 1890s the *Beethoven Mannerchor* built a large concert hall on South Alamo Street. It seated 1,200 people and was used for the society's performances and concerts by other musical groups.

The Casino Club was an exclusive social club chartered in 1857 with membership open only to men of San Antonio's German community. It may have grown out of a social club for German-speaking U.S. Army officers stationed at San Antonio in the early 1850s. *Kasino* (Casino) was a military term. →



In the German army, a *Kasino* was the officers' "mess" (dining hall and bar) where officers socialized. In 1858, the Casino Club built a clubhouse and theater on Market Street between Alamo and Casino Streets. The club brought musical concerts, operas and stage plays to San Antonio. It was the site of balls and other social events. Distinguished guests who visited the club reportedly included Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant. Casino Club members were instrumental in founding San Antonio's German-English School and in financially supporting it. The German-English School was established for the children of German settlers. The first classroom building was erected in 1858. Instruction was in English and German, and students attended school eleven months of the year. The school was forced to close in 1897 when faced with declining enrollments after free public schools opened. The buildings of the former German-English School are located at 421 South Alamo Street. They are now the property of the Marriott Hotel and are used as a conference center.

San Antonio's Germans organized a *Turnverein* (athletic club) in the 1850s. It was among the earliest German athletic clubs in Texas. Its members (known as Turners) were responsible for organizing San Antonio's first volunteer fire department in 1854 (known as the Ben Milam Fire Company Number One). In 1891, the Turners built a large, red-brick, two-story club house at 411 Bonham Street. It housed a bowling alley, and at one time served as a fire station. Strong anti-German sentiment during World War I caused the *Turnverein* to disband and to sell its clubhouse. Today the building is known as the Bonham Exchange.

The Sons of Hermann, a German fraternal society, organized its first lodge in Texas at San Antonio in 1860. It remained the only lodge in Texas until 1890. Many years later, when the society's lodges in Texas separated from the national organization and joined as an autonomous body, their home office was in San Antonio.

San Antonio's first German-language newspaper began publication in 1853. It was the weekly *Zeitung*. Thereafter, the city had a number of other German newspapers including the *Freier Presse für Texas*, the *Staats Zeitung* and a Catholic newspaper, the *Katholische Rundschau*. In the 1850s, one German newspaper began printing an English translation of its editorials. Politically the paper was abolitionist and anti-slavery. Consequently, its English editorials caused outrage among San Antonio's English-speaking population, most of whom came from the southern slave-owning states. Matters became so bad that members of the *Turnverein* volunteered to guard the newspaper's office because an Anglo-American mob threatened to bum and destroy it. The last San Antonio German language newspaper reportedly ceased publication in 1945, the year World War II ended.

San Antonio's beer gardens and saloons were places where Germans met to drink beer, to eat, to talk about politics and to read newspapers. One of these was Bohler's Beer Garden on Josephine Street. Its owner was Fritz Bohler. It is still in business, although under a different name as a restaurant. The Buckhorn Saloon also was a San Antonio landmark. It was owned and operated by Albert Friedrich and his wife, Emilie, and featured an enormous collection of animal horns. Beer was brewed locally. The first commercial brewery in Texas was founded at San Antonio in 1855 by hotel-owner Wilhelm Menger. His brewery was known as the Western Brewery, and by 1870 it was the largest beer producer in the state.

Lutherans, Methodists, and Catholics founded churches for German-speaking congregations. The first Lutheran church was St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church. Its sixty-four founding members included families that emigrated from Germany to Texas in the 1840s. The congregation's present church on Nueva Street was built in 1932. The use of English was first introduced at St. John's in the 1930s. Until then, German had been used exclusively for seventy-five years.

The first German Methodist church in San Antonio was no more than a block away from the present St. John's Lutheran. This small, stone church was built by German Methodists in 1879 in a Gothic Revival style of architecture. The Episcopal Church's Diocese of Texas purchased the building in 1895, and the City of San Antonio acquired the property fifty years later at the end of World War II. Today the former German church is known as the "Little Church of La Villita" and is used for a variety of social and civic functions. Unfortunately, nothing remains to indicate the building once was San Antonio's German Methodist Church. →

St. Joseph's Catholic Church is located at 623 East Commerce, literally "around the corner" from the Alamo. It was built to serve San Antonio's German-speaking population. In the 1850s, the growing number of German Catholics created a demand for a "national parish" using the German language exclusively. Consequently, the present St. Joseph's was erected in 1868. Its stained glass windows bear German inscriptions; its cornerstone is in German; and religious paintings in the church include works by one of its early German pastors. The use of German at St. Joseph's was not discontinued until the U.S. entered World War II in 1941.

San Antonio's Jewish community was not large in the 1800s because until 1821, under Spanish law, only Catholic immigrants were allowed to settle in Texas. Jewish immigration was prohibited. This changed after Texas won its independence, and by 1838 a small number of Jews settled at San Antonio. German immigrants contributed to a steady increase in the size of the Jewish community (which doubled between 1900 and 1920). Businessman Ferdinand Mayer, a native of Baden, was one of the founders of Congregation Beth-El in 1874. Its first synagogue faced Travis Park in downtown San Antonio. In 1904, the congregation built a new synagogue, and its present building at 211 Belknap was erected in 1927.

The gradual decline of German influences in San Antonio began at the start of the twentieth century. German immigration to San Antonio (and to Texas) sharply declined after 1890 while the number of immigrants arriving from other parts of Europe and from Mexico increased. Meanwhile, after 1890, newcomers from other part of the U.S. swelled the city's Anglo-American population. Germans lost preeminence as San Antonio's largest ethnic group. The all-German character of the "Little Rhine" area and "Sauerkraut Bend" changed as young German-Texans moved to homes in other parts of the city or to the suburbs, where the AngloAmerican population assimilated them. The opening of free public schools contributed to the assimilation of German children into Anglo-American culture. Instruction was in English. Therefore, the descendants of German immigrants were compelled to learn English as their second language. Consequently, German lost its importance in the lives of young German-Texans. They gave up speaking German or never learned the language from their parents.

World War I contributed to the decline of German influences. The war created a frenzy of intolerance and anti-German sentiment, not only in San Antonio, but also across Texas. Germans became suspect because of their ancestry and language. German-Texans who spoke German in public were threatened by Anglo-Americans. In some cities, German street names were changed. German families anglicized their names to appear to be Anglo-Americans. (For example, Mueller became Miller and Schmidt became Smith.) The anti-German backlash extended to trivial matters. Frankfurters became "hot dogs." The new name for Sauerkraut was "Liberty Cabbage." After 1917, "German Cheese" was sold as "American Cheese," and children no longer fell ill with "German Measles" but with "Measles." Anti-German sentiment did not disappear with the end of the war in 1918, but continued for a decade, even at the top levels of state government. For example, in 1919, Texas Governor Hobby vetoed an appropriation for teaching the German language at the University of Texas.

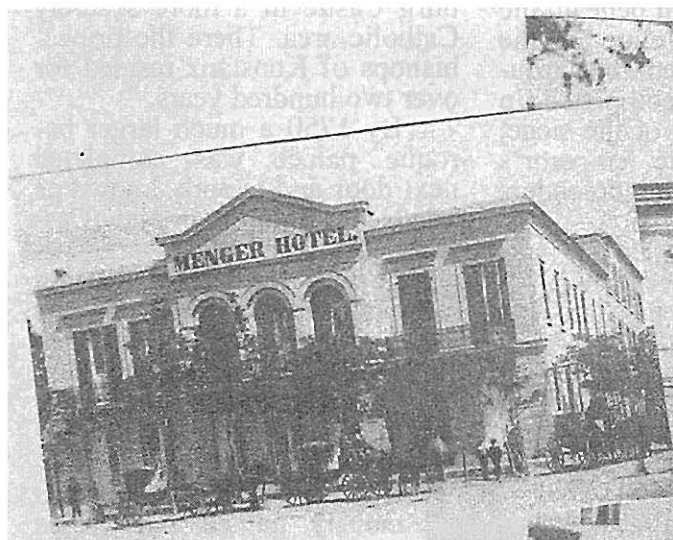
San Antonio's German community weathered this anti-German storm, probably better than the German community in Houston and elsewhere in Texas. Although San Antonio's *Turnverein* disbanded because of anti-German sentiment, the Casino Club, the *Beethoven Mannerchor*, and the *Liederkrantz* survived the wartime hysteria. (The Casino Club dissolved after World War II, but the two singing clubs are still active.) The congregation of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church continued to conduct religious services in German but introduced English in the 1930s. St. Joseph's German Catholic Church did not abandon the use of German until 1941. A few years later, the church lost its status as a "national parish" for German-speakers.

The disappearance of German influences in San Antonio accelerated after World War I. Several factors were involved in this process. By the 1920s, the first immigrants from Germany and their Texas-born children had died. The rise of Hitler in the 1930s and the terrible years of World War II in Europe made anything German unpopular in this country. During the war years, German was still the first language of many homes in San Antonio. However, the last generation of San Antonians who as children spoke German at home is now graying. Most of them now are seventy years old and older. →

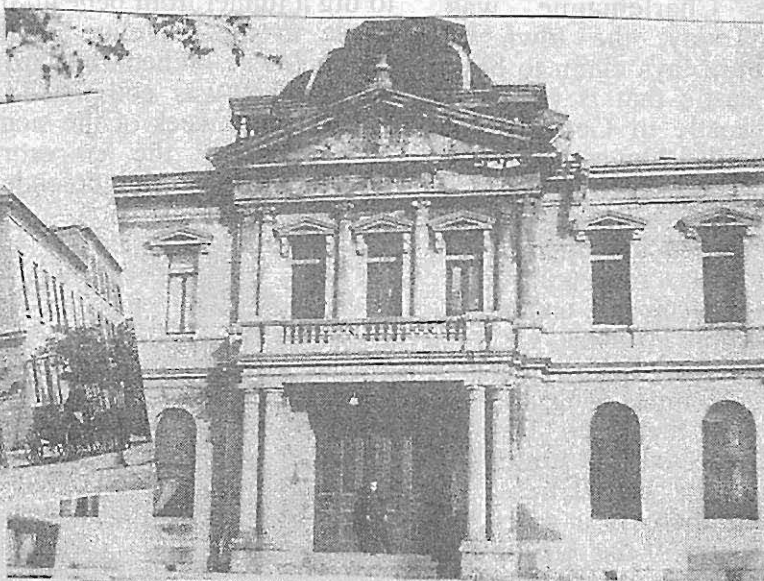


Knowledge of German disappeared with them. Their children and their children's children appear to have little interest in preserving German culture, or they entirely lack a sense of their German ethnic identity. All this leads to a conclusion that San Antonio's German heritage has been overshadowed or largely forgotten.

This conclusion may be true. But at least anyone visiting the site of San Antonio's original German neighborhood on the banks of the San Antonio River still can stop at Schilo' s on East Commerce Street. After almost ninety years, Schilo' s still advertises itself as a "German Delicatessen. "

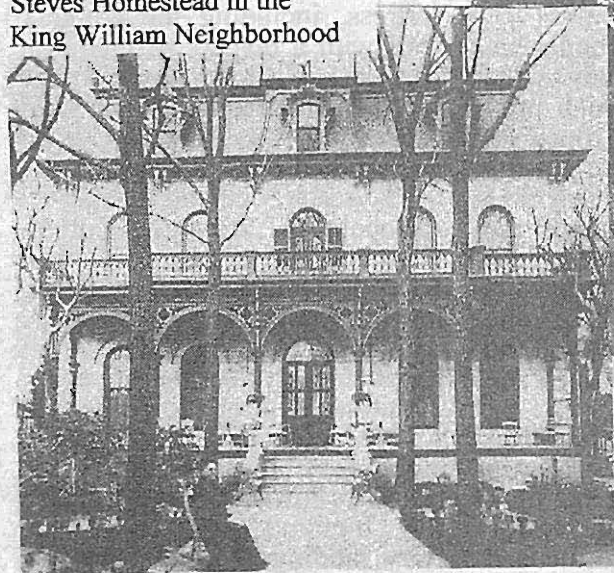


The Menger Hotel  
opened in the 1850s



Beethoven Hall built by the Beethoven Maennerchor

Steves Homestead in the  
King William Neighborhood



Buildings of the former  
German-English School

END



## Meersburg, Germany's Oldest Castle

By Ron Hunka  
*Renaissance Magazine, Issue 65*

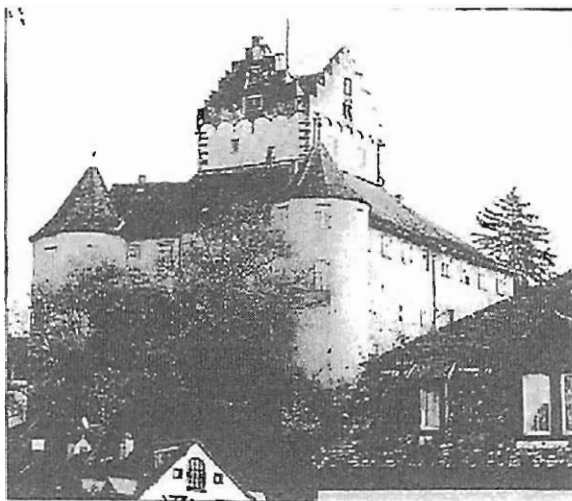
According to tradition, Dagobert I, ruler of the kingdom of Austrasia, laid the cornerstone of Meersburg castle in 628 in what is now southwestern Germany. So ancient is this castle that its founder died over a century before Charlemagne was born. Today, the town of Meersburg lays claim to having a castle that is both the oldest castle in Germany as well as the longest continuously occupied. Today, Meersburg Castle is privately owned but open to the public as a museum.

On a steep hill on the north shore of the vast Bodensee or Lake Constance, 42 miles long and up to 800 feet deep, Dagobert selected this strategic site for his fortress. From it, there is a spectacular view of the Alps in Austria and Switzerland to the east and south of the lake. On the opposite shore is the German city of Konstanz, whose history is intermingled with that of Meersburg, a twenty-minute ferry ride across the lake.

Beginning in the thirteenth century, the bishop of Konstanz was also a prince in the Holy Roman Empire. The dual roles of this powerful official sometimes brought him into conflict between his obligations to the pope and to the emperor. Such was the case with Prince-Bishop Nicholas von Kreuzlingen, who in 1322 sided with Pope John XXII against the emperor Louis the Bavarian regarding the legitimacy of the latter. This decision had a profound influence on the history of Meersburg castle.

The prince-bishop paid a high price when Louis laid siege to Meersburg castle where von Kreuzlingen had

taken refuge. The siege was notable for the first use of firearms in battle in Germany when they were employed against the defenders, though indecisively. Recognizing the eventual outcome of such a siege, von Kreuzlingen ordered 400 miners to dig a tunnel from beneath the castle to the shoreline of the lake below. When this arduous project was completed in the sixteenth week of the siege, undetected by the emperor's forces, some of the defenders



crossed the lake by night and began to re-supply the castle with the aid of allies in Konstanz. Eventually, Louis lifted the siege.

Later, part of the tunnel became a dungeon, known as the "hole of fear" into which prisoners were lowered by rope through a vertical shaft. In the 27-foot-deep dungeon prisoners were left to starve, hence the name "the hunger tower." Visitors can still gaze down into its sepulchral depths, where one prisoner carved into the wall the despairing words "Give me peace."

During the Protestant Reformation initiated by Martin Luther in 1517, events that took place on the south side of the lake in Switzerland influenced the history of the castle. Several Swiss cantons, including Zurich, converted to Protestantism.

In 1526, the city of Konstanz, the seat of the diocese and residence of the bishop, followed suit. As a result, Bishop Hugo van Landesberg fled north across the lake - just as von Kreuzlingen had done almost two centuries earlier - to Meersburg Castle in a more securely Catholic area. There the prince-bishops of Konstanz resided for over two hundred years.

By 1750 a much larger baroque palace was completed next door and is aptly known as Neues Schloss, or New Castle. In 1805, Meersburg Castle was secularized and became the property of the German state of Baden. In 1838, Baron Joseph von Lassberg bought the castle for a residence. His sister-in-law, Annette von Droste-Heulshoff, who posthumously gained renown as one of the greatest poets of German literature, lived there for six years until her death in 1848.

Thirty years later, Meersburg Castle became a museum. Today, parts of the 30-room castle can be seen on self-guided tours, and offer a rare look at a functioning medieval fortress, including the Knights' Hall with a display of medieval weapons. Visitors may also see the furnished rooms where Annette von Droste-Heulshoff lived and worked.

To reach Meersburg, take Autobahn A1 from the Zurich-Kloten airport toward St. Gallen. After 20.5 miles, near Wintertur, turn on to A7 toward Konstanz, which is about 25 miles. From Konstanz, ferries depart every 20 minutes throughout the day for Meersburg. The castle, clearly visible as the ferry approaches town, is located only a few hundred yards from the ferry landing. Tourists can also visit the New Castle, which is home to several museums.

END



## *Time Has Passed It By*

In the early 1980's, my mother gave my grandfather, Preson Charles Kobitz, a bound notebook and asked him to write remembrances from his boyhood growing up on the family ranch near Raisin, Texas. The town of Raisin is about midway between Victoria and Goliad, just off Highway 59, near Coletoville and Schroeder.) Most of the families around those parts at the turn of the century were of German heritage. My grandfather was born there a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation American, in the house built in 1873 by his Grandfather, Carl Kobitz. Carl immigrated to Texas in 1853 from Grottkau, Prussia, when he was 9 years old. My grandpa's book is full of stories about life in rural Texas during the early 1900's, and many of the stories are supported by photographs that my Great-grandmother collected and kept in a cardboard box under the Brunswick phonograph. Here now is one of those photographs, and the story to go with it - *Frank Brown*



*Frederich's Dance Hall, Raisin Texas (circa July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1900)*

"**Raisin** was quite a little burg. Otto Kolh had the big general store. Before the Postal Service started the rural mail service, he was also Post Master. There was also a cotton gin, two dance halls. There is a picture of the Frederich Hall among the old pictures. There was also a blacksmith shop and two saloons.

Frederich's Hall was quite large, and at Christmas there was a big live oak decorated with popcorn on string. I do not recall if there were apples and oranges. I do recall that there were many gifts under the tree. There were many barbecues, usually on July 4th or other special days. The charge was usually fifty cents for all you could eat. It included potato salad, noodle salads, coffee, vegetables, pickles, bread, and anything you would serve at home for a dinner, it would be on their table. This was always a gala occasion. It would start in the afternoon and end up with a dance at night. The saloons, of course, did a big business! There was always a number of fights, too. The cotton gin, the blacksmith shop, the Otto Kolh store are all gone, have been for years. Also the saloons. Time has passed it by."

Submitted by Frank Brown, Rowlett

END

## New Emigration Museum in Hamburg

In 2007, Hamburg, Germany, opened the Ballinstadt Museum, an area of seven acres dedicated to learning about what the more than 5 million emigrants experienced for whom Hamburg was the Gateway to the World between 1850 and 1939. The family research center with its huge data base is set up to help visitors from the USA.

Having emigrated from Germany via Hamburg/Cuxhaven myself, I plan to visit the museum this fall in order to establish a working relationship between the German-Texan Heritage Society and the BallinStadt Museum.

For details on the museum look at [www.ballinstadt.de](http://www.ballinstadt.de) or contact them at [info@ballinstadt.de](mailto:info@ballinstadt.de)

### Helga von Schweinitz, Austin

Excerpted from the April 08 *Ballinstadt News*  
*Courtesy of*

### Ambassador Dr. Klaus Scharioth – strengthening transatlantic relations

Since March 2006, Dr. Klaus Scharioth has been the German Ambassador to the United States in Washington. His function as ambassador includes more than supporting economic relations between Germany and the United States; his responsibilities and interests above all also include the furthering of interpersonal and cultural relations between the two nations.

In this context, he is also an active supporter of the Hamburg BallinStadt Emigration Museum. In the ambassador's opinion, the BallinStadt is making a major contribution in strengthening the relationship between Americans and Germans, and simultaneously in honoring the persons who courageously and confidently left their homelands to emigrate to America via Hamburg. He is pleased to help increase awareness about the BallinStadt, above all among Americans who have a German heritage.

The German embassy in Washington is promoting the topic of "heritage" in several unique ways. Together with the German National Tourist Office, the New York office of the Deutsche Zentrale für Tourismus, the GermanOriginality.com website was created. The site's goal is to make their "German heritage" more present to German-Americans. On the one hand, this is accomplished through photos, articles and films that document the contribution which Americans with German ancestors have made to the social, cultural and economic life of the United States. And on the other hand, visitors can set off on a virtual discovery trip – which they can also experience "live" in Hamburg – to find out "what it was like and what it's like today."

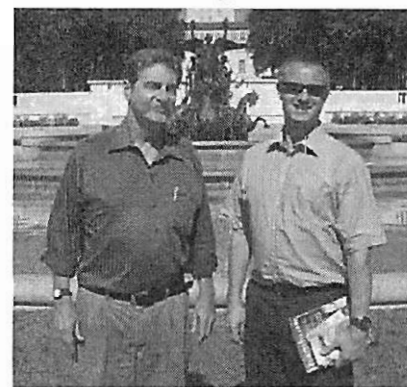
### The BallinStadt – well known, even in the Heart of Texas

Knowledge of the BallinStadt is also widespread in the southern parts of the United States. On a roadshow across Texas, where Hamburg Marketing experienced a wave of support from many multipliers, Hamburg's interactive experience museum and family research center were able to gain even greater awareness. The trip started at the end of October in Dallas; responding to an invitation from the American Council on Germany, the American Chamber of Commerce, the Dallas Goethe Center and William Hart, honorary German



German-Texan Heritage Society: Helga von Schweinitz and Gerri Gehman-West

consul of Dallas, the Emigration Museum and the City of Hamburg put on a lively presentation for interested audiences. Selected BallinStadt exhibits, such as the 1876 Emigration Consent issued by the Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg-Schwerin Department of the Interior, and the 1929 Valentine's Day menu from a HAPAG passenger ship (Hamburg-Amerikanische Packetfahrt-Actien-Gesellschaft), rounded off the

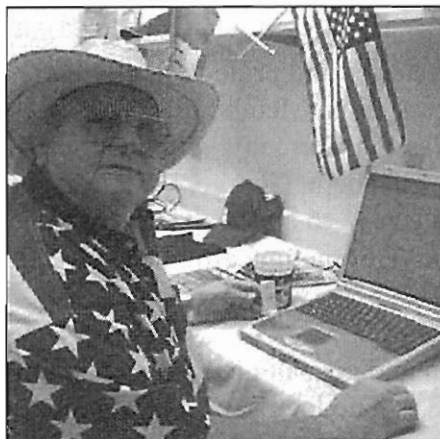


John Hoberman and Hans C. Boas, University of Austin →



presentation. At the accompanying get-togethers, representatives from business, heritage and culture expressed their interest in the BallinStadt and Hamburg, as well as in further cooperation.

As in the preceding year, in 2008 the BallinStadt was again present at the Wurstfest in New Braunfels. For an entire week, around 115,000 visitors celebrated their German roots at one of the United States' largest, most



traditional German-American festivals. This year, the fact that the BallinStadt was able to present itself at its own stand proved especially productive. The possibility to carry out family genealogy

research directly at the stand attracted many interested visitors to the BallinStadt booth. In addition to establishing new contacts to multipliers and media representatives, it was also possible to strengthen existing contacts.

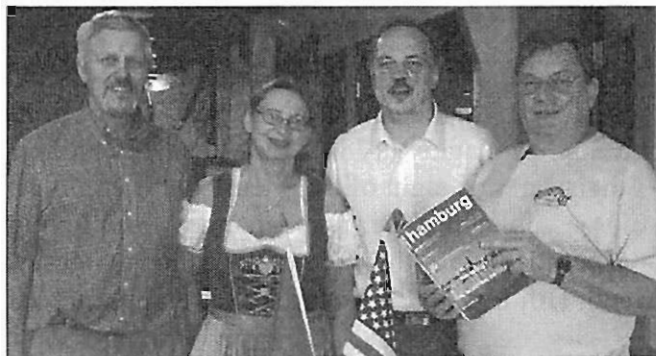


Wurstfest visitor at the BallinStadt booth

Through the informative presentations, and thanks to the support of the German Friesenhaus Restaurant in New Braunfels, the BallinStadt and Hamburg were

positioned as an attractive travel destination to interested guests

In the area of ancestor research, the German-Texan Heritage Society and the University of Austin's Texas German Dialect Project in Austin, as well as the Historical Foundation of Galveston, were signed on as new partners. The BallinStadt is now well-established in the southernmost part of Texas.



Wurstfest New Braunfels: from left to right: Günter & Cornelia Dirks (Friesenhaus), Peter Soppa and Frank Witting (President Wurstfest)



Andreas Bremer, Director of the Texas Warburg Chapter of the American Council on Germany in Dallas, Peter Soppa, soppamedien, Traute H. Malhotra, GACC German American Chamber of Commerce / North Texas Chapter, William Hart, Honorary German Consul of Dallas, Karl R. Ziebarth, Dallas Goethe Center

END

# People

## Unsolved Mystery Brings Meuth Family Together

The descendants of the Peter Meuth family discover that unsolved mysteries and pride in family heritage are what make genealogy a great way of bringing family together. Johann Meuth (1782 - 1837) and Sophia Wagner (1784 - 1848) had 12 children born in Würges, Nassau, Germany. After the death of their parents, eight of the Meuth children, Johannes, Johann *Peter*, Elizabeth, George, Karl *Josef*, Andreas, Johann *Franz* and Johannes *John* immigrated to Texas between 1846 and 1856. They settled at Meuth Hill with the exception of the youngest son, John, born in 1830. Sometime after his arrival at Meuth Hill in 1849, John left Texas and became an unsolved mystery.

The Rockne Historical Association has collected a wealth of historical and genealogical information about early settlers in Rockne, Texas, Bastrop County. In March 2008, Diane Fuerst, a John Meuth descendant, came across the Rockne Historical Association Website. She discovered not only the origins of over 900 John Meuth descendants in Missouri, but helped the Texas Meuths solve the mystery of the missing youngest son.

The mystery solved, it was time for the Texas Meuths and the Missouri Meuths to reunite. Nine descendants of Peter Meuth traveled 900 miles from Rockne, Texas to attend a Missouri Meuth reunion in Millwood, Missouri. Benjamin Saucedo drove while Blondena Saucedo navigated and Ovon Goertz, Theresa Shumake, Olivia Bartsch, Gloria and Clyde Hoffman prayed, talked, laughed and mostly slept in the roomy van. Charlie and Marian Nelson met the group in Troy, Missouri after visiting Nelson cousins along the way.



Charlie Nelson, Clyde & Gloria Hoffman & Marian Nelson  
Sisters: Ovon Goertz, Olivia Bartch, Theresa Shumake & Blondena Saucedo

After lunch together, the group piled into the van for the last leg of the trip. We drove through farm country and small communities, no larger than Rockne, surrounded by fields of corn and soybeans. The vivid colors of green everywhere was like an artist's palette and quite a contrast to the brown parched land in Texas.

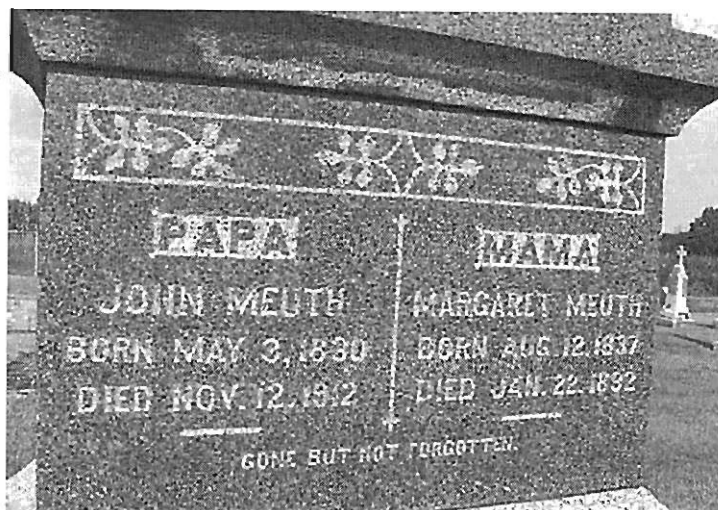
Diane Fuerst and Mary Jane Quade were waiting in Silex, to escort the Texans to Millwood. These two descendants of John Meuth were the epitome of loving cousins. "Hugs around" before moving on to Millwood where the group explored St. Alphonsus Catholic Cemetery. More nice cousins had marked all the Meuth graves with flags so it was easy to find their tombstones. The Cemetery, with many beautiful and unusual old markers, is large and neatly maintained. The weather was great for trekking around the cemetery, the town and the home place where John Meuth had lived. An old barn still stands on the acreage that he owned.





It was an inspiring tour and the invitation to share more "home town" hospitality was just the thing to highlight a perfect day. Mary Jane and her husband Lloyd Quade served extra large portions of her homemade apple pie made with apples from their garden. Gathered together on a spacious screen porch, the newfound relatives enjoyed the camaraderie.

August 17, 2008 - The big day arrived and the Texans gathered for 10:00 a.m. Mass at St. Alphonsus Catholic Church in Millwood. After Mass, more photos were taken as the attendees began to arrive at 11:00 o'clock for the reunion across the street at the Knight's building. There was some time for introductions before the big rush at the table Ovon Goertz and Marian Nelson set up with books, genealogies and charts. The interest was gratifying but how can one remember all these "cousins"? Benjamin Saucedo took pictures all along and there will be plenty memories to share. It was awesome!



John & Margaret Meuth Monument

**Ivo Meuth** was the honored guest celebrating his 95th birthday. He is the last living grandson of John Meuth. Ivo and his lovely wife, Marie, greeted and talked to his well-wishers. He also answered a question for the Texas Meuths stating that John came to St. Louis from Texas and worked there as a shoemaker. John later went to Hamburg, Illinois where he married before settling in Lincoln County Missouri.

The following excerpt appeared in an article in the Troy Tree Press, Jan. 1985.

*"... John Meuth received a good education in the German language, and when fourteen years of age began learning the shoemaker's trade. He was only about six years old when his father died and when he was about sixteen his mother also died. Having received his property, he left it in the hands of his guardian, and in 1849, he started for America. For several years, he worked at his trade, chopped cordwood, etc., and in 1854, he married Miss Ellen Gleson, a native of Ireland. Now was the time to send for his money, and he proceeded to do so, but found that his guardian had made way with the whole of it. In 1856, he moved to Lincoln County, MO. Here his wife died, and the following year he married Miss Margaret Kaster, a native of Hanover, Germany. Nine children were the fruits of this union, eight now living, four sons and four daughters. For twenty-six years, Mr. Meuth has lived on his present homestead, which consists of 620 acres. He is a Democrat in politics and he and wife are members of the Catholic Church. His first wife was also a member of the same church."*

A few of the Meuth Clan



The search for "roots" can be rewarding, gratifying and even exciting!

Submitted by Marian Nelson, Austin, editor of the *The Pioneer*,  
Rockne Historical Assn. Newsletter/Website

END

# Early Inventor Aimed to Exterminate Pests

**J. C. Melcher**

By **CONNIE SNEED**

*Fayette County Historical Commission'*

J.C. Melcher and his wife had come to Texas by way of Galveston. En route to the German settlement of New Braunfels, they found the Colorado River flooded. While they waited for the water to go down, Melcher had ample time to visit with ferry owner and Fayette County pioneer John Moore, also a noted Indian fighter. When Moore found out that Melcher was a cabinet maker, he said that a man proficient at that trade could make a good living right there. Moore soon convinced Melcher to forget about New Braunfels and stay in Fayette County.

In 1855, Melcher opened a general store at Black Jack Springs, a community between La Grange and Flatonia. While meeting the retail needs of his customers, he heard plenty of sad stories about crop eating critters.

A creative sort who despite his success as a merchant still liked to make things with his hands, Melcher invented a solution. He called, it "The Victory Ant, Mole, Gopher and Ground Squirrel Exterminator. "

The Exterminator consisted of two major components, a cast iron "fire chamber" and a wooden pump. The operator heated sulfur with coal in the 12- by 24-inch furnace, causing a build up of sulfurous gas in the chamber. It had a sharpened flange that went into the ground over a gopher or ant hole.

The 11- by 11-inch pump, nearly three feet high, at 30 strokes a minute pushed two cubic

feet of gas into a pest's underground domicile. That much gas, Melcher asserted, could fill a two-inch gopher hole 2,000 feet long with deadly fumes.

The Fayette County man's device must have been quite effective. His invention won first place at the 1879 State Fair of Texas, an event then held in Austin. Melcher received an ornate "Diploma," complete with an engraving of the limestone Capitol that would burn down a few years later.

Less than a month after winning his prize, on Nov. 18, 1879, Melcher received from the U.S. Patent Office a patent for his pest-control device. Word of the invention's effectiveness soon spread. The Jan. 3, 1880 edition of the *Scientific American* had a story on the Exterminator that gave it and its creator national recognition. Melcher soon went to a job printer and had a handbill run off.

"I have manufactured over 400 pumps during the last few years," the inventor-entrepreneur said in the advertising piece, "and have taken great pains to bring them as near perfection as possible and will continue to improve them if I possibly can."

The piece also announced that "territorial rights" to sell the device could be purchased "very cheap for cash, land, notes, or other good property."

Just how many salesmen Melcher recruited and how well his business went is not known by his descendants.

Unfortunately, the handbill is the only known evidence of Melcher's product. A fire at the old family homestead at Black Jack Springs destroyed Melcher's house and any unsold Exterminators he might have had around.

*The Fayette County Record*, November 7, 2008

Submitted by Rodney Koenig, Houston



# The Christmas Truce of 1914

Ron Hunka looks back at a historic day of peace in the middle of war

DESPITE EARLY GERMAN successes in WWI, the Battle of the Marne, fought in September 1914 against French, Belgian and British troops, stalled the German advance. The deadlock that ensued resulted in the combatants' entrenchment in close proximity to one another. This familiarity with the opponent and his daily routine played an important role in the Christmas Truce, which took place between British and German soldiers at the end of 1914.

In 1914, "fair play" was still maintained on both sides of the line. For example, it was common that the breakfast hour was respected by both sides as a cessation of hostilities, or "king's X" period. Also, an estimated 80,000 Germans had worked in England before the war, and those who became German soldiers knew its language and customs. Sergeant Charles Johnson recounted one event when "the Germans shouted over to our trenches for a *Daily Mirror*", and a British soldier

sportingly threw a weighted paper back to them.

In a way, the Christmas Truce was an extension of that spirit of "playing the game" as it was known, intensified by the first holiday season of the

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In many locations, the soldiers agreed not to resume fighting the next day, but to meet again between the lines.

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war. In fact, the German troops had been encouraged by the Kaiser to celebrate the Christmas holidays. So, strange as it may seem, on Christmas Eve, they decorated their trenches and ramparts with Christmas trees sent from home. When they lit the candles on them, the British regarded the multitude of flickering lights suspiciously.

## Silent Night

Many surviving letters home from both sides document the events of that evening. In one, Sergeant A. Lovell wrote, "I shall remember to my dying day. Right along the whole of the line were hung paper lanterns and illuminations of every description". From the German side, Lieutenant Johannes Niemann reported that on Christmas Eve, "Our soldiers had hung little Christmas trees covered with candles above the trenches".

As the British stared in amazement at the displays of lights along the front, in many places, German soldiers began to sing traditional Christmas songs; a particular favorite was "Stille Nacht (Silent Night)". In a letter, Private Albert Moren described hearing that beautifully rendered carol resonating across a cold, dark No Man's Land. "I shall never forget it, it was one of the highlights of my life." For other British soldiers, that song, heard years later, would invariably



Left: British and German soldiers declared an informal armistice on Christmas 1914, trading cigarettes, rations and even addresses. Right: A German soldier in a British trench.



carry them back to the front on Christmas Eve 1914.

In many places, the British, after hearing the German carols, applauded and called out for more. Then they began to sing their own Christmas songs, such as "O Come All Ye Faithful". Finally, the opponents alternated serenading one another.

### Meeting In No Man's Land

After a while, the Germans called out that they would not shoot if the British would come over. Warily, the British declined with an "after you" response. Eventually, in some places, small groups of brave men from both sides left their trenches, walked slowly toward one another with their arms raised, and met in No Man's Land in the moonlight. In the words of Private Frederick W. Heath, "Out went the hands and tightened in the grip of friendship. Christmas had made the bitterest of foes friends."

The British and German soldiers talked and smoked cigarettes together and exchanged names and addresses. In many locations, the soldiers agreed not to resume fighting the next day, but to meet again between the lines. Often, the truce did continue on Christmas Day. Men from opposite sides fraternized with one another, exchanged uniform insignia, took photos, shared refreshments, such as Christmas pudding and beer, and even engaged in impromptu

football matches. Lieutenant Niemann wrote home that in a game in which he seems to have participated that his team won three to two.

### End of the Peace

Both sides also attended to the burial of fallen comrades whose

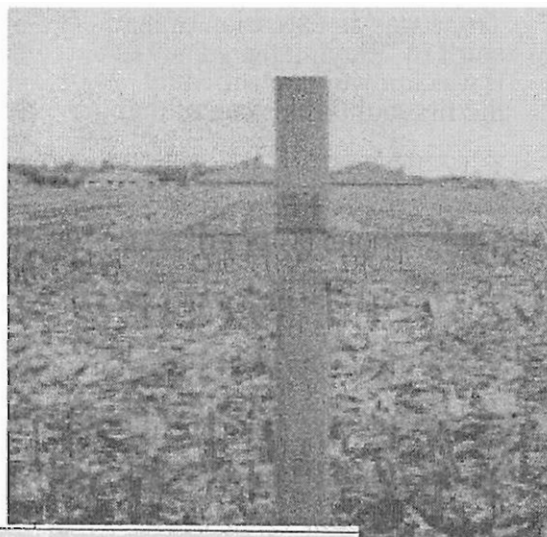
continued on through Boxing Day, the day after Christmas, and in yet others for days or even as much as two weeks. There was also a brief time when it seemed that some British troops might revolt and refuse to return to the war.

### Remembering the Truce

Some 16 years later, in the House of Commons, a member of parliament, Major Murdoch McKenzie Wood, who had been at the front in 1914, spoke of those events. "I came to the conclusion that I have held very firmly ever since, that if we had been left to ourselves there would never have been another shot fired."

The most remarkable aspect of the Truce of 1914 was that British and German soldiers had risen above the political machinations that had sent them off to war and come together, if only briefly, as human beings in peace and friendship on the occasion of Christmas.

The events of that frigid Christmas day have been retold in books, songs and film. On Christmas 1999, The Association for Military Remembrance re-enacted the Christmas Truce along the site of the front near Ypres, Belgium. They placed a cross in the field, which has become an informal monument to that brief armistice.



Above: In 1999, a group of British re-enactors placed a cross near one of the sites of the Christmas Truce. The inscription reads "The Khaki Chums Christmas Truce, 1914-1999". Left: Cover of *The Illustrated London News*, 5 January 1915. News of the Truce was relayed to Britain through soldier's letters, which were often printed in newspapers.



bodies had been trapped in No Man's Land for weeks or even months. Germans solemnly helped British in this duty and British soldiers helped Germans. In some places, the truce lasted just a few hours. In others, it

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## WILLIAM MAKOWSKI, METHODIST CIRCUIT RIDER

Albert Makowski, a carpenter, lived in Danzig, Prussia (now Poland). One very cold winter day in about 1879 he came home to find all members of his household very ill and without firewood. He left the house, presumably to find help, and never returned. Weeks later his body was found near a narrow footbridge crossing a stream. Thereafter his family lived in a severely impoverished condition relying on help from others and a meager income derived from the menial jobs the family members could find.

His survivors were his wife Christiana, son Friedrich Wilhelm (age 10), Hanna (age 3), Clara (age 1) and stepdaughter Louisa Seifert from Christiana's first husband who died in a typhoid epidemic. In later years Friedrich Wilhelm (known as William) related to his children a story about the Christmas after his father's death when again all of the family stayed in bed throughout the day to keep warm. The only food they had that day was a gingerbread man brought in by a neighbor.

In spite of the hardship, William apparently received a reasonably good education and worked after school at Kiekhoefen Manufacturing Co as a packager. Three years military service in the Prussian Army was mandatory, but after his discharge at age 22 he emigrated to New York. Upon arriving in Guadalupe County he found employment near McQueeney at the Blumberg farm and after two years saved enough from his earnings to pay ship passage for his mother and two younger sisters to join him. The half-sister had already married and did not come to Texas until several years later. Their mother, Christiana, is buried near the south side of Lake McQueeney in a small un-named cemetery where some of the Blumbergs are also buried.

William Makowski was not a religious person and normally did not attend church service. He did enjoy music and one afternoon he heard singing and was curious enough to find its source. What he found was a Methodist Campground Revival. He returned again the next day to listen, but did not join the group. After several visits he began moving in closer to better hear and before the series of meetings ended he had joined the church.

From this experience he decided to become a Methodist Minister and in 1896 at age 28 he enrolled at Blinn College in Brenham. He earned his tuition by cutting wood at \$1.00 per cord. Ministerial students were required to assist in church services as part of the curriculum. He was assigned to the Methodist Church at Phillipsburg near Brenham. It was there that he first saw the young lady who was to become his wife. She was Henriette, born 12 May 1878 in Wehden, Prussia, to Friedrich and Henrietta Meier Wellman. William only completed one year at Blinn. During his second year a need arose for a pastor at the Methodist German Conference church in Hondo. William was assigned to the task and left the next day carrying everything he owned in a small duffle bag. In 1899 William received appointment to a church in Houston, but before going there he stopped in Phillipsburg where he and Henriette were married 7 December 1899. The wedding ring cost of \$8.00 (eight cords of wood cut) depleted his total assets to \$35.00. Their first son, William H, was born in Houston on 9 October 1900 just days after the great hurricane at Galveston had devastated south Texas; and their second son, Edwin Walter, was born there 22 July 1902.

Next assignment was a circuit that included churches at Victoria, Tivoli, and Goliad. Since transportation option was either walk or ride horseback, William became a Circuit Rider leaving him little time to spend with his young family in Victoria since completion of the circuit sometimes took as much as 3 weeks. During one of those occasions William discovered upon his return that his daughter, Frieda, had been born 10 days earlier on 4 Jul 1904.

In 1905 the family moved to Hilda in Mason County where Makowski succeeded Rev William →

Buehrer. The community at that time consisted of church, parsonage, one-room school, cemetery, a few homes and a small store where the post office was located. Nearly all structures in the surrounding area were very durably constructed of native stone. Makowski also served the church at nearby Art except when high water made the Llano River crossing impassable. The salary at Hilda was \$600.00, the parsonage had no furnishings, nor was a horse and buggy provided; but church members were generous in sharing their food. Deer, feral hogs, turkeys and other wildlife were plentiful and milk was easily obtained by milking a range cow. The family really enjoyed their stay at Hilda and I heard my father speak several times about great times he and his siblings had during the seven-year tenure there. Two more sons were born into the family here, Walter on 4 January 1908 and Hugo on 28 July 1910. A 1962 Centennial Celebration document of the Hilda Church made note of Makowski's wood chopping skills, his thorough catechism classes, and of his sermons "strack von der leber."

In 1911 a new assignment sent the family in December during a terrible winter storm to Blue Mound near Ft. Worth. Upon finally arriving in Blue Mound after three days and two nights the family discovered that the parsonage was too small and had no food, no fire wood, and no bam or feed for horses; and Rev. Makowski was to preach the next morning. Later they learned that Blue Mound was not an all German community and the children would need to learn English in order to take advantage of educational opportunities there. They did this with zeal once they realized they could talk all they wanted to without their parents understanding what they were saying. On 24 February 1913 the fifth son, Milton was born. Because of the very small parsonage and ever increasing size of the family Makowski requested transfer to a place with better facilities.

He was transferred back to Brenham, not to pastor a church, but to organize new churches between Brenham and Houston. In his first year he organized eight new churches, but the requirement of being almost constantly away from his family prompted him to ask for reassignment since he and Henrietta were expecting another child. He was then assigned to the German Methodist Church in Lexington, Lee County where Irvin was born on 28 Dec 1916. The family bought its first car, a two seated Ford, but Rev. Makowski never learned to drive. His sons and daughter did all the driving and Edwin became proficient enough as a repairman to keep the car functioning. Once a month Makowski preached at Cooks Point northeast of Caldwell in Burleson County. He always used his horse and buggy for the several hour journey. After Sunday night services he turned the wagon towards Lexington and occasionally went to sleep in the wagon. The horse knew the way back home. The three oldest Makowski children met and married the three youngest children of Heinrich and Bertha Ebers Grusendorf who were members and strong supporters of the Lexington church. William married Linda Grusendorf in 1923, Edwin married Bertha Grusendorf on 6 January 1925, and Frieda married Henry "Bud" Grusendorf in Industry on 21 May 1925. The church in Lexington paid \$1,250.00 annually, the most Makowski ever made during his preaching career, and the last time the entire family lived together under one roof.

After great satisfying years in Lexington he was transferred in 1924 to Industry in Austin County. Will and Edwin stayed in Lexington. There was no established salary at Industry or at nearby Post Oak. It was necessary for the pastor to visit the homes of members each fall to ask for donations. If crops had been good, the donations were generous; if poor, the donations were very small. Makowski had realized the need for English to be spoken in church due to events in World War I. He began studying English and eventually one Sunday night each month in Industry he held services in English for the benefit of the young people who had learned the new language. Henrietta never learned more than a few phrases of English.

A 1928 assignment was to the German church in Fashing, Atascosa County. Fashing was a small community with sparse population and a school taught only through the seventh grade. This really split →



up the family. Walter and Hugo had already completed the seventh grade, so they went to live with Frieda and Bud in Rockdale where they could continue their learning. Milton moved in with relatives in Lexington. In 1929 Walter married Iris Fleming in Rockdale. The only child still at home during the Fashing days was Ervin.

The next move was to Moody-Leon Church at the Buckhorn Community near the Bell-McLennan County line. This was one of his more difficult assignments. The church was divided into factions and it was difficult to appease dissidents. Before he had been there a year a faction within the congregation tried to force him out by cutting his salary to \$50.00 per month. He could have asked the district superintendent for a transfer but decided to see it through which he did for four years due to loyal members who helped by providing food for the table, feed for the livestock, and transportation as needed. During this time Milton moved back with his parents and met and married Cora Frase whose family lived in the community.

The next move was to Meiers' Settlement Church in McLennan County between Waco and Riesel. It was a small church with really pleasant, cooperative members. The big bonus was that the whole family was together again in the same area, all having moved to McLennan County for various reasons. In 1936 Henrietta died of a ruptured appendix and was buried at the Meiers' Settlement Cemetery behind the church. In 1937 Irvin was riding his motorcycle to work when he was in a fatal accident with a drunken driver. He also is buried in the same cemetery. Rev Makowski soon thereafter retired and moved into the home of Milton & Cora in Bellmead, Texas. During World War II there was a severe shortage of ministers and when Makowski was invited to return to Meiers' Settlement he was delighted. He did not live at the parsonage, though; Will and Linda asked him to share their home in nearby Riesel. Rev. Makowski preached his last sermon on 17 December 1950. The following Friday night, while attending a Christmas program at the Riesel church he had a cerebral hemorrhage and died the next day. The funeral was held on Christmas Day and he was buried next to his wife and youngest son at Meiers' Settlement.

The churches at Hilda, Industry, and Meiers' Settlement still serve congregations. Most of the facts related here were extracted from a booklet written in 1980 by Frieda Makowski Grusendorf entitled "The Life and Labors of William Makowski", reproduced and bound by Poly-graphics, San Marcos, Tx. Frieda was the only Daughter of William and Henrietta Makowski.

Submitted by Edwin Makowski, (Mission, Texas) grandson of Rev Makowski

### *Descendants of Friedrich Wilhelm Makowski*

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- 1 Friedrich Wilhelm Makowski b: 21 May 1868 in Free City of Danzig d: 23 Dec 1950 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx  
 .. +Henriette Wellman b: 12 May 1878 in Wehden, Germany d: 20 Apr 1936 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx Mother: Henriette Wilhelmine Meier  
 .... 2 William H Makowski b: 09 Oct 1900 in Houston, Harris Co, Tx d: 20 Jan 1973 in Riesel, McLennan Co, Tx  
 ..... +Melinda Grusendorf b: 07 Apr 1898 in Lee Co, Tx d: 22 Jun 1978 in Riesel, McLennan Co, Tx Mother: Bertha Florence Ebers  
 ..... 3 Helen JEAN Makowski b: 14 Mar 1924 in Tx d: 07 Dec 2001 in Granbury, Hood County, Tx  
 ..... +Henry Fred "HF" Jr Meier b: 22 Mar 1922 in Tx Mother: Isabelle C Behringer  
 ..... 4 David Mack Meier b: 02 Dec 1943 in Bexar Co, Tx  
 ..... +Anna Carol Weaver Mother: Bessie Alice Miller  
 .... 2 Edwin Walter (ED W) Makowski b: 22 Jul 1902 in Houston, Harris Co, Tx d: 15 Apr 1972 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx  
 ..... +Bertha Florence "Bettie" Grusendorf b: 19 Jul 1903 in Lee Co, Tx d: 01 Jun 1990 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx Mother: Bertha Florence Ebers  
 ..... 3 Edwin William Makowski b: 29 Nov 1928 in Lexington, Lee Co, Tx  
 ..... +Laura Etta Cagle b: 24 Apr 1932 in Marshall Co, Al Mother: Sarah Pairlee Cagle  
 ..... 4 Michael Edwin Makowski b: 07 Sep 1958 in Hillcrest Hospital, Waco, McLennan Co, Tx  
 ..... +Donna Lynn Soule (McClelland) b: 20 Aug 1953 in South Bend, In  
 ..... 4 Andrew Arthur Makowski b: 08 Aug 1959 in Hillcrest Hospital, Waco, McLennan Co, Tx  
 ..... +Carol Jan Needham b: 13 Oct 1955 in Oakland, Ca Mother: Mae Margaret Mosley  
 ..... \*2nd Wife of Edwin William Makowski:  
 ..... +Lois ANN Walker b: 22 Jul 1932 in Ocoola, Tx Mother: Wilma Lois Stinson

- ..... 3 Frances Odell Makowski b: 24 Oct 1931 in Lexington, Lee Co, Tx
- ..... +Henry Meyer SoRelle b: 08 Dec 1929 in Texas Mother: Nita Lucille Ray
- ..... 4 Henry Meyer Jr SoRelle b: 16 Sep 1954 in Houston, Harris Co, Tx
- ..... +Caroline Elizabeth Cooper b: 22 Mar 1952 Mother: Johnnie Gerald "Geri" Woodson
- ..... 4 Dianne Frances SoRelle b: 03 Jul 1955 in Houston, Harris Co, Tx
- ..... +Michael Lee Northcutt b: 24 Apr 1955 Mother: Charlotte Harper
- ..... 4 Linda Ann SoRelle b: 27 Nov 1957 in Houston, Harris Co, Tx
- ..... +Mark Piepenbrok
- ..... \*2nd Husband of Linda Ann SoRelle:
- ..... +Robert B Hill b: 21 Sep 1949
- ..... 4 Cheryl Jean SoRelle b: 03 Jan 1967 in Houston, Harris Co, Tx
- ..... +Michael James McCarter b: 21 Oct 1965 in Arlington, Tx Mother: Rebecca Lee Shawn
- ..... 3 Joanna BETH Makowski b: 02 Feb 1933 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Robert McFarlane Jackson b: 11 Jan 1929 in Canada d: in Tx Mother: Jean Hale Jackson
- ..... 4 Stephen Charles Jackson b: 22 Jul 1952 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Brenda Kay Kemp b: 16 Aug 1953 Mother: Geraldine Jackson
- ..... 4 John Robert Jackson b: 29 Sep 1955 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Diane Marie Shaw b: 12 May 1957
- ..... \*2nd Husband of Joanna BETH Makowski:
- ..... +Wayne Thomas
- ..... \*3rd Husband of Joanna BETH Makowski:
- ..... +Troy Huffington
- .... 2 Frieda Sophie Makowski b: 04 Jul 1904 in Victoria, Tx d: 21 Nov 1982 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Henry Ludwig "Bud" Grusendorf b: 16 Jan 1901 in Lee Co, Tx d: 08 Dec 1978 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx Mother: Bertha Florence Ebers
- ..... 3 Mildred Ann Grusendorf b: 14 Aug 1929 in Milam Co, Tx
- ..... +Ray Browder Easley b: 24 Apr 1928 d: 02 Dec 2005 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... 4 Russell Boyd Easley b: 28 May 1964 in McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... \*2nd Husband of Mildred Ann Grusendorf:
- ..... +George Matt II Knuckles
- ..... 4 George Matt III Knuckles b: 01 Mar 1956 in McLennan Co, Tx
- .... 2 Walter Gustav Sr Makowski b: 04 Jan 1908 in Hilda, Mason Co, Tx d: 02 Mar 1978 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Iris Fleming
- ..... 3 Eugene Walter Makowski b: 07 May 1930 in Rockdale, Tx d: 07 May 1935 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... 3 Carol June Makowski b: 28 Sep 1933 in Rosebud, Tx d: in San Angelo, Tom Green Co, Tx
- ..... \*2nd Wife of Walter Gustav Sr Makowski:
- ..... +Grace Brown b: 17 Apr 1917 d: 19 Oct 1975 in McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... 3 Delores Ann Makowski b: 24 Feb 1948 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Richard Thomas Reid b: 30 Dec 1944 in McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... 4 Cindy Denise Reid b: 16 Aug 1967 in McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Harry Don Graham
- ..... 4 Richard Scott Reid b: 22 Oct 1972 in McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Sheryl Denise Pogue b: 26 Sep 1971 in McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... 3 Walter Gus Jr Makowski b: 31 Jan 1950 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Sharon Kay Fowikes b: 09 May 1951 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx Mother: Dolores Marie Spencer
- .... 2 Hugo Friedrich Makowski b: 28 Jul 1910 in Mason Co, Tx d: 13 Nov 1971 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Charlotte "Collie" Tusa b: 29 Dec 1917
- .... 2 Milton Henry Makowski b: 24 Feb 1913 in Blue Mound, Tarrant Co, Tx d: 22 Jan 2000 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Cora Wilhelmine Frase b: 16 Nov 1915 in Topsey, Coryell Co, Tx Mother: Rosine W Bredthauer
- ..... 3 Kenneth Ray Makowski b: 05 Aug 1939 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Renate Fehn b: 20 Sep 1937 in Wurzburg, Germany
- ..... 4 Debrah Ann Makowski b: 18 Aug 1966 in Lawton, Ok
- ..... 4 Sandra Denise Makowski b: 28 Nov 1970 in Wisconsin
- ..... +Harold W Thompson b: 1968
- ..... 3 Charles Lynn Makowski b: 04 Dec 1947 in Waco, McLennan Co, Tx
- ..... +Deborah Nesbit b: 12 Dec 1949
- ..... 4 Ann Nicole Makowski b: 25 May 1976 in San Antonio, Bexar Co, Tx
- ..... 4 Clay Alan Makowski b: Jul 1979 in Chicago, Il
- .... 2 Ervin Otto Makowski b: 28 Dec 1916 in Lexington, Lee Co, Tx d: 19 Jul 1937 in Limestone Co, Tx

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## Comfort Heritage Foundation Archives Receives Gift

By Anne Stewart

Submitted by Anne Stewart  
*Comfort News*, October 9, 2008

Paul Burrier, Leakey historian and author, knows more about the Nueces Battle and Massacre of August 10, 1862, than anyone else in the entire world. There are a few wanna bees and many people who use his materials and quote him, but Paul Burrier is Number 1. And he gave six-3 ring notebooks of biographies of people involved in the Nueces Battle and Massacre to the Archives. Paul Burrier is as generous with his knowledge and research as was Gregory Krauter.

Paul was the keynote speaker at two early spring meetings this year of the Foundation. He spoke to standing room only audiences and mesmerized the lot of us with his view of the big picture

and all the small details surrounding the Nueces tragedy. He left the notebook at the time saying: "Let folks come in and copy any biography or as many as they need to help with their family tree work. I'll stop by and pick them up late this fall."

Paul's gift occupies approximately eighteen inches of shelf space and consists of an estimated 500 + biographies. Needless to say, Margaret Morris, Joint Archive Coordinator, stored them safely, bringing them out when people came in looking for family information.

Comfort has a special place in Paul Burrier's heart and his gift will be well taken care of and used by any and eve-

ryone in need of high quality biographical data. I can say with certainty that the Confederate Research Center in Hillsboro, Texas, the Center for American History Studies at UT Austin's old Barker Center and the Institute of Texas Cultures in San Antonio would all pay dearly for this valuable collection. Please pass the word that this information is lodged permanently in the Foundation building on the corner of 7th and High Streets, Comfort, Texas, and Encourage young and old alike to come and do their research. Thank you, Paul Burrier. Generations to come are indebted to you.

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## Martin Luther Revisited

An Exhibition shows that the reformer was not from a poor background

Years ago, a famous German television host sued journalists who had stolen his garbage in order to gain insight into his private life. The TV star rightfully defended himself against this objectionable investigation.

No one, however, can prevent archeologists from digging through the garbage of the deceased in the name of science.

In the case of the comprehensively investigated Martin Luther, it has brought something new to light. Contrary to his own testimony, the reformer by no means came from a poor family. On the contrary, his family led an extravagant lifestyle as new discoveries show.

In Mansfeld, where the family had moved a few months after

Luther's birth, the Luther family evidently owned not only a house but three interconnected buildings as well. In a dump behind the property, scientists found 300 silver coins, pieces of jewelry, cookware and children's toys. The family had apparently disposed of, burned and hastily buried its possessions there after two of Luther's brothers had died of pestilence in 1505 - out of fear of contracting it. The bones of pigs and poultry were found as well that prove a markedly middleclass existence.

During excavations at the family's later residence in Wittenberg, archeologists found spectacular things as well: the remains of a tower-like extension that had been torn down

in the 19th century turned out to be the actual location of Luther's study where he had developed his groundbreaking ideas. And in Wittenberg, they discovered a garbage dump belonging to Luther as well. Apparently, the University of Wittenberg had disposed of Luther's effects after it had taken over the property following his death. The archeologists' booty: Luther's dinnerware, glasses, exotic dishes from Venice, colorfully enameled stove tiles, Luther's writing set with an inkwell. All of that is on display at the State Museum of Prehistory in Halle until April 26. *PHK*

*Atlantic Times*, Dec 2008, p. 20

Submitted by Theresa Gold, San Antonio

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## C. W. Heppner A Visionary for the German-American People of Dallas

It is difficult to say when Carl Wehelm Heppner came to be in Dallas County. The earliest record in the newspapers is the baby of the Heppners, who died in 1888, and is buried in the West Dallas Cemetery on Fort Worth Avenue. In 1892, C. W. Heppner is mentioned in the Herald for having a role as trustee at Turner Hall for the German-American Club. In 1893, Luise Heppner is also mentioned as Dame at the Teutonic celebration at Turner Hall.

By census documents, C. W. Heppner came to the United States in 1883, and became a naturalized citizen in 1889. His 1920 census lists him as a builder in occupation, and as a merchant in furniture in 1930. He is listed as living at Western Heights, which is West Dallas, at the time. His wife, Ida, is also listed as being age 70, in 1920, while C. W. is listed as 69, while his brother, Henry, is shown as age 71.

The life of C. W. Heppner has only been partially told. In 1930, The Dallas Herald ran an article on him detailing his vision from the 1900's for how the Trinity River flood plain should be used. It seems that there was a long battle between Heppner, nature and the city and county of Dallas as to the harnessing of a dangerous river and how to most effectively use its flood plain (which, to this day, there is not agreement on how the Trinity flood plains should be used, i.e. as a park, or as a toll road.)

While Heppner is recognized for his handling of the affairs and consolidation of societies, to then become one central group at the Sons of Hermann located on Elm Street, in 1910-1911, his visionary reform concerning the Trinity River flood plain would come to exist at a time when the City of Dallas would ignore the plight of the German-Americans who suffered from floods in the West Dallas, Western Heights area.

In 1905, he is mentioned in the Morning News for raising the issue of how the waters from the Trinity would flood and cover the pike, forcing traffic to use the old wooden bridge of Oak Cliff, which was unsafe for use; his concern was for the many farmers and growers of vegetables, livestock owners and brewers, who lived and worked in the area and traveled into Dallas to do business.

1906 he began to erect his 3-story boat house, used in the rescue of animals, livestock and persons, who would be displaced by the floods that came in the first decade of the 20th Century. During and after the great flood of 1908, he created the West Dallas Improvement League, which would meet at his home, concerned with the proposed viaduct across the Trinity. By 1908 the league would have 100 members. Later, in 1908, the League, now composed of many German-American and old West Dallas farmers, would meet to raise these issues, and again in 1909, when the issue would come up again, asking the citizens, "Have they forgotten the damage done by the floods?"

In 1909, Mr. Heppner renamed the group, the Trinity River Levee and Drainage Club with membership now at 368. He would organize events and picnics, one taking place at Pates Park in West Dallas, to allow for speakers to address and discuss these issues and to debate the plans to create a levee.

At the time, in 1909 and 1910, plans were already being made to begin construction of the world's longest concrete roadway viaduct, or aqueduct, from Dallas to Oak Cliff, finished during a long drought in 1912, comprised of poured concrete, made from Dallas sewage water.

Oak Cliff was able to work with the city and county on how to handle the flood waters of the Trinity; thus, one way to cross a river in flood stage was solved for Oak Cliff, not West Dallas.

Dallas farmers had lost some 300,000 to 500,000 acres of crops to the 1908 flooding, which also brought malarial conditions, and the South Dallas scourge of malaria and typhoid. Heppner continued to be concerned for the risk and danger to farmers, and the some 8,000 residents who lived in the area.

In 1909, C. W. Heppner asked the county commissioners to build a first-class road along the West Dallas Pike. The idea, when brought to the County Commissioners and City of Dallas officials, came as a very odd and expensive request in a poor place like West Dallas. Mr. Heppner was forced to reflect on his request, and asked who was going to pay for such an improvement. He later offered the concept of building a boulevard where the West Dallas Pike once ran, now known as Commerce Street.

C. W. Heppner was also concerned about the lack of education and knowledge that the farmers in the area exhibited and in 1911, in a letter to *The Morning News*, Heppner discussed the need for deep plowing in the area, and the benefits gained by such farming. His views were based on an old German formula, where crop rotation would create conservation for the soil in the area. He worked hard to expose farmers to how they could raise better crops of wheat, and have a much more vital source of grain production, which would bring a better price for the farmer at the market. His motto, "Large plants can't be grown in small flower pots."

He realized the farmers in Texas has a lot to learn in maintaining better-grown crops. He saw the →



need for them to work together to do so, instead of having to compete among themselves and make farming in Dallas County a struggle and hardship. In Germany, many families would get along and get more done, and enjoy the outcome of a great harvest.

The time between 1909 and 1914 was a time of progress and poverty in Dallas County and the City of Dallas. Prohibition began 1917-18, before the legal law date of 1919. The first aeroplane was flown in the city around 1910; cars were becoming more common, and the farmers were in decline, as the city limits began to expand, and more and more people would move to Oak Cliff, then reside in West Dallas. By 1920, West Dallas was a poor place to be living in, and the conditions would not improve until the 1950's, when the area was finally annexed to the City of Dallas.

Meanwhile, farmers and developers for the City of Fort Worth began making known their needs for a levee program; some of these citizens were Germans, who bought on to Heppner's ideas even though in 1912, he discussed in an article that he was against the plan to build levees on both sides of the river. Their concerns were valid since the Trinity ran through Fort Worth, bringing much of the sewage water to Dallas. The Sons of Hermann Hall, after 1912, would provide a space for the German-Americans and other immigrants to voice their opinions on such lax efforts by the City and County of Dallas.

By 1922, no steps had been taken for flood protection, and Heppner again states in *The Morning News*, and before the County Commissioners court, of October the 15th, that he would have to go to Washington and address this issue before a group of people, who could come down to Dallas and see the conditions of the West Dallas area after a flood.

Heppner's timing, again, is not good in trying to get action with the war's end and a recession of sorts had come about. Men who fought in the war were enraged that the government did not have much to do with those who came back and found their jobs were no longer in existence; while President Warren S. Harding was caught in a complex scandal with oil, in the Teapot Dome affair, and would later die of a heart attack in San Francisco, in 1923.

By 1929, work would finally begin, to inspect and survey the entire district, and see how a plan could be created to harness the Trinity River. And, in the article stating the plans to inspect and build levee walls for the prevention of flood waters in the West Dallas area, C. W. Heppner's name would misspelled, and listed at the bottom of the list of the many opportunists, who would take Heppner's vision, and profit from it, in some other unusual, financial way or manner, from the development.

The Herald, however, ran a front page of a second section on Heppner's boat house, and gave him quite a story, which made him appear as a lonely eccentric, while the article has lasting value of how the German-Americans became Americans, after all, by 1930.

During the construction of the levee, he was forced to sell and move from his boat house, since the road and levee construction ran straight onto his property, where the present Commerce Street bridge stands today, and not more than 100 feet from the present 1932 levee walls of earth and concrete. However ironic such an event came to exist for C. W. Heppner, he did see the reality of his vision when Dealey Plaza was opened to the public in 1936, and upon his death at age 86, in October 1936, weeks after these events came to a final conclusion.

He is buried in the Old Oak Cliff Cemetery, and had two daughters who survived him when he died.

In 1997, a massive amount of road and construction work took place around the old concrete Commerce Street bridge, of which a lot of brick, marble (for furniture), old Model T tires, rusty tools, and old pots and pans, were exposed from the earthwork to set a steel beam under the foundation of what should be called today, Heppner's Bridge.

### **German Background and Personal Credits**

Little is known of the people like C. W. Heppner and his German associates, who helped create the Sons of Hermann Hall in 1910 and attempted to influence their communities in America. I encountered my German heritage sometime in the 1960's, when I would visit the Deep Elm's hunchbacked-German shoe repair shop, on Elm Street.

My German-American background is 5th generation descent from Charles Gepp, of Baden, Germany, who immigrated to Jersey City, in the 1860's, and my grandfather, Harold C. Gepp, who moved to Dallas, from Detroit, Michigan, to become a fleet manager for Oldsmobile in the Southwest, in the 1950's.



I would like to thank Lloyd Bockstruck, of the Genealogy Division of the Dallas Public Library, for his selfless efforts to expand and update the Historical and Scholarly studies of the German-American people in Dallas. And, Ed Boehringer, who also serves the Dallas Genealogical Society in Dallas, and who was stationed in Germany, in the late 1970's, and served in the United States Army, and came to a realization of his German ancestors from such an adventure, and to this day, continues to expand the realization of such a unique race of people.

In Memoriam, to the late Christopher Kepler, Judge of Muenster, Texas, and avid German and genealogical scholar, who passed away in 2006. His interests and efforts were also an inspiration to many people in the field of German-American studies and heraldry. And, Jo Nicodemus, whose loyal and dedicated interest to help maintain and preserve the Sons of Hermann Hall, on Elm Street, has made this a unique follow-up, and thus, one ends one version of how the German-Americans came to exist in Dallas, Texas, and will continue to, and hold to traditional visions into the future.

And, Jim Wheat, for typesetting. **Submitted by Alexander Troop, Dallas**

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## "Houston Liederkrantz" zu Gast in der Elbestadt

15. September 2008 | Von Claudia Jörgens

Transatlantische Sängerefreundschaft: Ein Chor aus Texas war zu Gast bei den Sängern des Glückstädter Chors "Lied Hoch".



Gastgeber für den Chor aus Texas: die Sänger von "Lied Hoch".

"Ich weiß, Sie haben nur wenige Stunden hier in Glückstadt. Ich empfehle Ihnen, besichtigen Sie die Stadtkirche und schauen Sie sich den Hafen an. Genießen Sie ihre Zeit hier", wünschte Bürgermeister Gerhard Blasberg in bestem Englisch.

Trotz eines vollen Terminkalenders hatte er sich die Zeit genommen, die Besucher aus Texas in Glückstadt willkommen zu heißen. Die Mitglieder des "Houston Liederkrantz" waren auf einer Europareise und machten dabei einen, wenn auch kurzen Abstecher nach Glückstadt. Denn die Texaner verbindet eine langjährige Freundschaft mit dem Glückstädter Chor "Lied Hoch". Der hatte die Sänger jetzt ins Glückstädter "Tivoli" eingeladen, um gemeinsam zu singen, zu essen, zu feiern und die alte Freundschaft wieder einmal aufzufrischen.

"Es ist schon eine ganze Zeit her, dass wir unsere Texanischen Freunde zum letzten Mal gesehen haben", berichtete Horst Pottrick, der für den Ablauf des Besuchstages verantwortlich war. Umso größer war die Freude auf beiden Seiten, sich nun wiederzusehen.

Neben dem gemeinsamen Singen standen fröhliche Gespräche über heute und damals im Mittelpunkt des Treffens. Erinnerungen wurden aufgefrischt und Neuigkeiten ausgetauscht. Mit einer kleinen Verspätung waren die amerikanischen Gäste am späten Vormittag am "Tivoli" vorgefahren. Das schöne Wetter hatte für eine längere Wartezeit an der Fähre von Wischhafen aus gesorgt. Dafür wurden die Sänger dann umso begeisterter begrüßt.

Nicht nur die Mitglieder von "Lied Hoch", auch Sänger aus den umliegenden Chören waren zur Feier gekommen. Begonnen wurde, wie konnte es anders sein, mit Gesang. Mit amerikanischem Liedgut stimmte der "Houston Liederkrantz" auf den musikalischen Teil ein. "Oh, Suzanna" klang es laut und kräftig durch den Saal. Der gemischte Chor aus Amerika mit seinen über 30 Mitgliedern war gut bei Stimme und ertete jede Menge Applaus.

"Früher hat der Chor fast nur deutsche Lieder gesungen. Gegründet haben ihn deutsche Auswanderer", berichtete Horst Pottrick. Erst in den vergangenen Jahren haben die Sänger unter ihrem musikalischen Leiter





John Scarcella auch amerikanisches Liedgut einstudiert.

Dass sie das deutsche aber ebenso meisterlich beherrschen, zeigten sie mit einem beeindruckenden "Still wie die Nacht". Den Abschluss ihres Vortrages bildete schließlich ein deutsches Trinklied, bei dem dann alle mitklatschten und schunkelten. Nachdem auch "Lied Hoch" sein Können gezeigt hatte, zu Ehren der Gäste starteten sie ihren Vortrag mit "Simple Melody", wurde gemeinsam gegessen und viel geklönt, teils auf Deutsch, teils auf Englisch. Am Nachmittag nahmen sich die Gäste und ihre Gastgeber noch den Rat des Bürgermeisters zu Herzen und besichtigten die Stadt, soweit es ihnen in der Kürze der Zeit möglich war. Dann hieß es auch schon wieder Abschied nehmen, denn die Texaner reisen in den nächsten Tagen bereits weiter nach Prag.

### **Translation: Transatlantic Singer Friendship: A Choir from Texas Sang as Guests of the Glueckstadt Choir "Lied Hoch."**

"I know you only have a few hours here in Glueckstadt. I recommend that you see the city church and have a look at the harbor. Enjoy your time here!" said Mayor Gerhard Blasberg in his best English.

Despite a full schedule, he had taken the time to welcome the visitors from Texas to Glueckstadt. The members of the Houston Liederkrantz were on a European trip and made a, however short, side trip to Glueckstadt, because the Texans have had a long time friendship with the Glueckstadt Choir "Lied Hoch." They had invited the singers to "Tivoli" in Glueckstadt to sing, eat, and celebrate together, as well as renew old friendships.

"It's been a long time since we've seen our Texan friends", reported Horst Pottrick who was in charge of the visitors' day. Even greater was the happiness of both parties to see each other again.

In addition to singing together, there were many merry stories about the past and present. Memories were refreshed and news was swapped. After a small delay the American guests arrived at "Tivoli" late in the morning. The beautiful weather meant that there was a longer waiting time for the ferry from Wischhafen. That just ensured that the singers were greeted even more enthusiastically.

Not only were the members of the "Lied Hoch" there, but also singers from other choirs came. It began, how could it happen any differently, with singing. The Houston Liederkrantz started off with American traditional songs. "Oh Suzanna" sounded loud and strong throughout the hall. The mixed choir from America with over 30 members had a good sound and was roundly applauded.

"In the past the choir sang almost all German songs. It was founded by German immigrants", Horst reports. It's only been in the past few years, with their musical director John Scarcella, that they have begun to incorporate American songs.

The fact that they can sing German songs just as masterfully was demonstrated with an impressive "Still wie die Nacht (Calm As The Night)." The conclusion of their presentation consisted of a German drinking song to which everyone clapped and swayed. After "Lied Hoch" showed off their program with "Simple Melody" they ate and chatted together partly in English, partly in German. In the afternoon, the guests and their hosts took the mayor's advice and toured the city, as much as it was possible in the short time. They had to say goodbye already, since the Texans had to leave for Prague the next day.

Source: [www.shz.de/lokales/norddeutsche-rundschau](http://www.shz.de/lokales/norddeutsche-rundschau)

Author: Claudia Joergens

Submitted by Rodney Koenig, Houston

Translated by Melanie Schmidt-Dumont

# Hungers Provided A Good Night's Sleep

*The Fayette County Record*, November 14, 2008

Submitted by Rodney Koenig, Houston

## La Grange Mattress Factory

By LILLIEMAE BRIGHTWELL

*Fayette County Historical  
Commission*

In the 1960s Arnold and Clara Hunger, who lived on their farm near La Grange, decided to buy the Helter mattress factory equipment which was located on Highway 77. They purchased the mattress equipment, small cotton gin, and a heavy duty sewing machine (Singer 31-15 Industrial Tailoring treddle machine) and rented a building from August Hunger.

They eventually purchased a home at 1094 North Von Minden and a tin building with a wooden floor for their factory.

It was a second marriage for the two. Arnold had a son named Leslie whose mother died when he was 4 1/2 years old, and Clara had a daughter Patricia. Clara and Arnold were a team, making new adult small, and double mattresses plus cotton pillows.

Mattresses were made either with light duty springs or heavy duty springs (either box springs or innersprings). They also made baby mattresses. If someone had an old mattress and wanted it reworked, they

would do that too.

People would bring their own cotton or new cotton was purchased for a mattress. The cotton was ginned by the small cotton gin run by an electric motor and placed on a form the size of a mattress.

Boards were used to flatten the cotton, and the cotton was sucked into the cover made of cotton ticking; somewhere during this operation, the inner-springs or box springs were added. A crank pulled the cotton into the cover, and the boards were removed.

Clara sewed the mattress cover and rolls around the side. Arnold tufted the mattress by hand and needle, attaching the thread to a cotton ball.

Springs came by freight in compressed small bundles and had to be opened outside, tied with a rope and then released. They would stand five feet high when opened. Ticking came in big rolls.

When they received an old mattress to rebuild, some had lint cotton (trash) in them, and they could not use the cotton.

If the old mattress had good cotton, but not enough, they added more cotton, and it was ginned to fluff it up. A new cover and springs were added,

and the mattress was loaded and tied to the top of the car and taken to Brenham where a heat process was used to sterilize it.

They delivered the mattresses tied to the top of the car to the customers. To manufacture a new mattress, it took one to two days.

They manufactured mattresses for the old jail in La Grange, and reworked the mattresses from the jail. Sometimes they found small bags of marijuana in the mattresses they were given to rework. They also did work for the Fayette Memorial Hospital in La Grange.

Eventually the mattresses got to be too heavy for the mature Hungers to handle. It was time to semi-retire. Arnold started to sharpen saws, circle saws, scissors, knives and lawn mower blades. He and Clara spent more time at church with the family and working in their garden. They retired in the 1990s.

A collector of antique sewing machines here in Fayette County is now the proud owner of the sewing machine and states it is in excellent condition. The cotton gin was donated to the Schulenburg museum.

Source: Oretha and Leslie Hunger

END



Living in another country, one inordinately confronts the stereotypes one has of the new and adopted home. But what happens when you take them on, literally?

When I lived in the U.S., I was chronically late. I hate to admit it: People could generally expect to wait for at least 10 minutes for me at restaurants, movie theaters and bars.

Still, in my defense, the habit must be in my genes: My mother couldn't be on time if her life depended on it. Add to this my very scattered and overwhelmingly busy work life (read: an 80-hour work week) and it is somewhat less inexcusable.

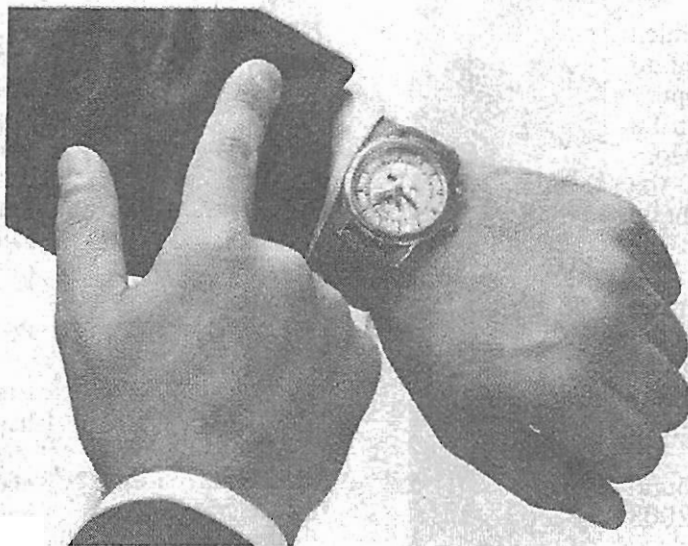
Still, when I moved to Germany, I knew things would have to change: Life in the land of "Pünktlichkeit" and "Ordnung" would be a challenge if I continued on with my sad ways. I was ready. Besides, I wanted to fit in. So like most things, I overdid it - I am now *überpünktlich* - and it has had all kinds of strange consequences including driving my German colleagues and friends nuts.

For example, one of my German friends who is rarely late, started to get annoyed when she arrived to meet me and I was already there: I stole her thunder (and her pride in her punctuality).

At one job, if I didn't arrive 10 minutes before my shift started as I usually did, I would get calls wondering what was wrong and asking whether I would be in at all.

Another time, I overestimated the time it took to get to a specific movie theater across town, arriving 30 minutes early. As I was mulling how to pass the time before my friend showed up, there she was: "And I thought just once,

## German Stereotypes: Pünktlichkeit



I would beat you here," she said, crestfallen.

Another of my German colleagues, waiting for me at our office, told me when I arrived a rare 10 minutes late for our meeting: "I was going to text you because - well, this is you."

Funny how no one on the other side of the Atlantic would recognize this 'me.'

Part of this is about changing in order to adapt. But the other part of this story is the fallacies we learn about other cultures: Germans, too, can be chronically late.

One close friend of mine, a German television

reporter, is so habitually unpunctual that I bring a book when meeting her. One time, she arranged for a groupmeet (another lovely German habit of getting all your friends who don't know each other together because you don't have time to see them all individually).

She straggled in a half hour behind schedule (as usual) to find all of us craning our heads from different tables, trying to recognize who else might be waiting for her.

And of course, the cardinal rule: Do not, I repeat, do not show up on time for certain Berlin parties. Fashionably late is two hours or more, definitely after midnight to show you are cool, in demand, had other engagements first besides, many hosts deliberately set the beginning time two hours earlier than they want people to arrive.

But a warning: Do not try this in Denmark (where I once lived). Because despite their easy-going, party-happy reputation, if you are two minutes early to a birthday party, everyone there wonders why you are - in their terms - late.

*Jabeen Bhatti*

END

Submitted by Theresa Gold, San Antonio

*The Atlantic Times—Life* December 2008

# German Pedals On

## *Around the World, by Way of La Grange*

By H.H. HOWZE  
The Fayette County Record

Submitted by Rodney  
Koenig, Houston

When German bicyclist Klaus Kuras turns left onto Alemannen street in his hometown of Wiesbaden sometime before the first of the year, he might have just come from the grocery store.

If so, he will have ridden his bike around the world to pick up a few items for supper.

Kuras stopped briefly in La Grange and Round Top Monday on his way around the globe and the *Record* caught up with him at the Latte on the Square.

The *gemütlich* 43-year-old information technology consultant told tales and showed photos of his almost year-long journey which began in Wiesbaden March 26.

Kuras headed east, bound for Beijing, site of the 2008 Olympic games. He made it in time to attend some events and has photos of himself and his trusty Velotraum (dream bike) at the Bird's Nest stadium and Tiananmen Square to prove it.

In fact, Kuras has a photo diary documenting of all of his travels on line at <Rad-fernweh.de>. He has also toured South America and Europe on his bicycle.

After three weeks in Beijing, the wandering *Deutscher* thought "*warum nicht*" and decided to go on around the world.. He pedaled to the sea, then back to Beijing and caught a plane to Los Angeles. After dipping a tire in the ocean, he

started across the United States on Sept. 11 (a coincidence, he noted).

When he gets to the East Coast; he'll fly to Paris, ride back to the Atlantic to touch the water, then cycle home to Wiesbaden. When Kuras turns left onto Alemannenstrasse, the circumnavigation will be complete.

Kuras said he tries to average about 100 kilometers a day (about 60 miles). On Monday a headwind from the north was impeding his progress through Fayette County. Kuras' impressions of Europe and Asia went like this:

-Czech Republic and Poland- "a little familiar."

-Belorussia- "a communist dictatorship; un happy looking people."

-Russia - "welcoming and friendly; no fences, easy .camping."

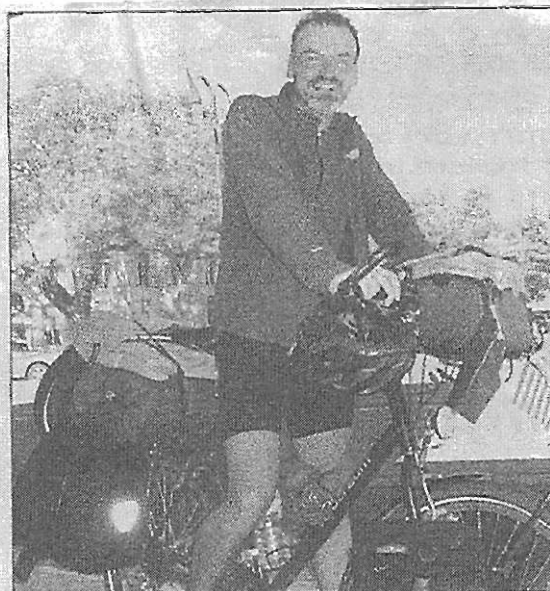
-Gobi desert - "105 F, three gallons of water per day."

-United States - "land of bigger is better; high prices."

He has one or two spare tires with him at all times as well as an iPhone and GPS loaded with cycling maps. He stays on the back roads whenever possible.

When last seen, he was taking a photo of the Round Top General Store and wondering about where to eat lunch, a good question on Monday in Round Top.

*Auf wiedersehen, Klaus. Gute reise!*



German expedition cyclist Klaus Kuras astride his Velotraum (dream bike) on the Fayette County square Monday. His website and trip log is at <Rad-fernweh.de>

Staff photo by H.H. Howze

The Fayette County Record, October 31, 2008

END



To titrate in a lab at MIT, to study at Harvard Business School—at first glance, the U.S. is something like the Promised Land of science for German post-doctoral fellows. Half of all college students in Germany who desire to continue their "academic careers abroad" spend some time in the United States - undisputedly the most important destination for academics on the path to a professorship.

This is all the more so due to the large number of universities there, which makes the job market much more promising than back home in Europe. After a successful, positive evaluation in a post-doctoral position, the tenure track beckons.

But a scarcity of funds at universities is also having an effect in the U.S. and tenure track positions are ultimately granted to just a few. Recent surveys show a majority of postgraduates would love to return home as a result. German politicians, provosts and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) have pounced on these scientists and are vigorously tempting them to return home.

The reason is that Germany is suffering from a brain drain. That is why GAIN, the German Academic International Network run by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the German Research Foundation and the DAAD regularly extend invitations to recruitment-like meetings. Participants are flattered with statements like "You are among the best!" The German Initiative for Excellence also aggressively solicits young talented scientists with new projects, positions and money, offering them one-of-a kind opportunities back in Germany.

One person who seized this opportunity is Katja Schmitz, 29. She was recently appointed research director at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology. The biochemist is leaving her position at Harvard's Department of Biological Chemistry and Molecular Pharmacology.

"It wasn't that Harvard actually taught me anything new," she said. She had previously earned her biochemistry degree at the University of Bonn. Speaking of her under graduate education, she says, "It was very, very good. We have no need to fear comparisons."

At the time, Schmitz decided for the U.S. because she had already spent a semester abroad studying in the UK and wanted to remain in the English-speaking world. She says that the United States is naturally the leader in life sciences. Research budgets in the U.S. usually have at least 10 times more funding than their European coun-

## The Best Shall Return

Most German post-docs in the U.S. want to return home

By Adrienne Woltersdorf

Many students in Germany dream of earning a degree in the U.S. and an academic career at an Ivy League institution. About 5,000 German researchers fulfilled this dream and currently work on the other side of the Atlantic.

The Atlantic Times, December 2008

Submitted by Theresa Gold, San Antonio

terparts. The laboratory equipment across the Atlantic was impressive, Schmitz added. She found countless numbers of interesting genome projects in her field. Still, Schmitz is confident: While Germany is expanding support for young scientists thanks to politics, the U.S. is cutting support for the same reasons. That is why she said she is delighted to be able to work in Germany again.

Just like Schmitz, Thilo Holscher, 41, admittedly very much enjoys the can-do attitude that prevails in American institutes. They do not discuss thing to death, American colleagues are much more open to new ideas and generally there was noticeably more flexibility, he said. But Holscher admits that not everything that glitters is gold - last year he attended a GAIN event and decided to return to Germany.

Holscher, a graduate in neurology, went as a research scientist from Regensburg University Hospital to the University of California at San Diego in 2002. He was promoted to assistant professor there in the radiology and neurology departments. And yet he returned to Regensburg this fall.

On the one hand, it was a very personal decision for Holscher. "I'm quite attached to Germany," he admitted. On the other, he wasn't surprised to find that he could explore projects in Germany that would be hopeless in the U.S. As a highly specialized neurologist, Holscher developed a method to effectively begin treating heart attack patients in the ambulance before they get to the hospital. "I could not get this idea developed in San Diego," he said. "There were far too many legal hurdles in the way." In Germany, the city of Heidelberg responded immediately to the idea. It will be using this new treatment method in the near future to save lives, as Holscher put it.

Neither researcher said they would want to do without their experiences in the U.S. Holscher said his time there was a "win-win situation. He is returning to Germany with a project contract in his pocket for future collaboration with commercial partners from the medical industry. This would never have happened in Germany, as he feels certain that the hierarchies there are too rigid. But now he sees better possibilities than ever for himself at the Regensburg clinic.

Schmitz also wants to return to Germany because "home is home." Naturally, Harvard has substantially increased her market value in Germany. But she does not feel that Harvard took any better care of her than her alma mater in Bonn. "There is simply a lot going on in Europe," she said. "The universities are so dynamic right now. It's exciting." ..

END

## THE FAMILY OF CHRISTIAN & MARGARETHE GASKAMP

By Daniel Bode

**Johann Friedrich Christoph "Christian" Gaskamp** was born 17 October 1833, in Haldem, Westphalia, Germany. Christian was baptized 19 October 1833, and he was confirmed 1 April 1849, in the Lutheran Church Parish, Dielingen, Westphalia. Christian was the son of **Gerd Friedrich Gaskamp** (born 14 Sept. 1792 in Haldem; died 23 Jan. 1872 in Haldem); and his wife, **Marie Margarethe Engel Meyer** (born 27 Dec. 1800 in Germany; died 9 Sept. 1859, in Haldem, Westphalia). Christian's parents were married 14 May 1819, in Haldem, Westphalia, Germany.

Christian Gaskamp's siblings were:

1. **Marie Margarethe Engel Gaskamp** born 5 June 1821, in Haldem, and she died in Germany, sometime after 1882. She married a widower, **Johann Christian Heinrich Duvelmeyer** on 28 March 1856, in Haldem. Mr. Duvelmeyer was born 17 Oct. 1814, in Haldem, and he died 18 Nov. 1882, in Haldem.
2. **Friedrich Heinrich Gaskamp** born 25 Jan. 1824, in Haldem, and he died 18 Sept. 1881, in Arrenkamp, Westphalia. He married **Marie Margarethe Elisabeth Vordemfeld** on 28 Oct. 1848, in Arrenkamp. She was born 1 Oct. 1820, in Arrenkamp, and she died 28 Nov. 1880, in Arrenkamp.
3. **Marie Margarethe Louise Gaskamp** born 23 Jan. 1827, in Haldem, and she died 14 Nov. 1897, in the Wuthrich Hill Community of Williamson Co., Texas. She married **Gerd Friedrich Heinrich Wiethorn** on 23 Feb. 1860, in Haldem. He was born 27 Jan. 1826, in Haldem, and died 29 July 1872, in Haldem.
4. **Johann Heinrich Gaskamp** born 23 May 1830, in Haldem, and he died 1 Sept. 1882, in the Zionsville Community of Washington Co., Texas. Heinrich first married **Anna Marie Louise Meier** on 16 Oct. 1852, in Haldem. She was born ca. 1828, in Germany, and died 13 Feb. 1856, in Haldem. After her death, Heinrich Gaskamp married **Marie Sophie Engel Wiethorn** on 20 May 1857, in Haldem. She was born 18 May 1833, in Haldem, and died 16 June 1866, in Haldem.
5. **Engel Louise Gaskamp** born 12 Feb. 1837, in Haldem, and she died 1 Dec. 1871, in Haldem. She married **Carl Dieterich Heinrich Tiemann** on 21 July 1859, in Haldem. He was born 28 Dec. 1829, in Haldem, and died 8 Sept. 1868, in Haldem.
6. **Margarethe Engel Agnes Gaskamp** born 11 Nov. 1840, in Haldem, and she died at Riesel, Texas, on 7 April 1912. Agnes married **Wilhelm Heinrich David "Henry" Haferkamp** on 13 March 1896, in Haldem. Henry was born 7 Dec. 1838, in Haldem, and he died 28 March 1928, at Riesel, Texas.
7. **Margarethe Louise Sophie Gaskamp** born 25 July 1845, in Haldem, and she died at Brenham, Texas, on 15 Jan. 1936. Sophie married **Heinrich Winkelmann** on 8 Jan. 1869, in Washington Co., Texas. Heinrich was born 26 May 1845, in Oppendorf, Westphalia, Germany; and he died 11 March 1922, in the Zionsville Community of Washington Co., Texas.

Christian Gaskamp married **Marie Margarethe Elisabeth Schmedthorst** on 27 April 1860, in Haldem, Westphalia, Germany. Margarethe was born 19 January 1837, in Haldem. She was baptized 29 January 1837, and she was confirmed 13 April 1851, in the Dielingen Lutheran Church Parish. Margarethe was the daughter of **Cord Heinrich Schmedthorst** (died 8 July 1861 in Haldem) and his wife, **Marie Margarethe Ilsabein Robker**. Margarethe's parents were married 24 May 1834, in Haldem, Westphalia. Margarethe had one brother, **August Friedrich Heinrich Schmedthorst** (born 4 Oct. 1834, in Haldem, and he died 13 Dec. 1897, in the Zionsville Community of Washington Co., Texas; he married **Henriette Louise Dorothea Stickan** on 6 July 1855, in Haldem).





**CHRISTIAN & MARGARETHE****SCHMEDTHORST GASKAMP** Christian

Gaskamp and his wife, Margarethe nee Schmedthorst, were both natives of Haldem, Westphalia, Germany. They married in 1860 in Haldem. In October of 1871, Christian and Margarethe, along with other family members, left from the port of Bremen, Germany, on the SS *Frankfort*, headed for Texas. The ship docked in New Orleans, Louisiana, in November of 1871. They made their way to Washington County, Texas. Christian and Margarethe Gaskamp settled in the Washington County community of Zionsville, northwest of Brenham. They became members of the Zion Lutheran Church of Zionsville. They were married 46 years when Christian died in 1906, at the age of 72 years. Margarethe survived her husband eight years and she died in 1914 at the age of 77 years. Both are buried in the Zion Lutheran Church Cemetery. Christian and Margarethe Gaskamp were the parents of seven sons: Fritz (1861-1935), Henry (1863-1931), Bill (1865-1963), August (1868-1948), Herman (1874-1936), Charlie (1877-1973), and George (1879-1980). Christian and Margarethe have numerous descendants living in Washington, Coryell, Bosque, and McLennan Counties, along with other Texas counties.



Christian and Margarethe Gaskamp lived the first 11 years of their marriage in Haldem, Westphalia. They had seven sons born to them. The first four: **Fritz, Henry, Bill, and August** were born in Haldem. In October 1871, Christian and Margarethe and their four sons left Germany for Washington County, Texas. Making the journey with them was Christian's widowed brother, Johann Heinrich Gaskamp and his children; Christian's sister, Agnes Gaskamp Haferkamp, her husband, Henry, and their children; and Christian's niece, Margarethe Duvelmeyer and her older half-sister, Wilhelmine Duvelmeyer. Their ship, the SS *Frankfort*, left from the port of Bremen, Germany. Christian Gaskamp's youngest sister, Sophie, had left Germany for Texas in 1867. She married Heinrich Winkelmann in 1869 in Washington County and they had settled in the Zionsville Community. Christian's brother, Johann Heinrich Gaskamp, had sent his oldest son, Johann Heinrich Phillip Gaskamp, ahead to Texas in 1870. The ship carrying the families docked in New Orleans, Louisiana, in November of 1871. The families made their way to Washington County, Texas. Christian and Margarethe settled in the Zionsville Community where they farmed and their last three sons: **Herman, Charlie, and George** were born. Christian and Margarethe became members of the Zion Lutheran Church of Zionsville. Later in 1882, Christian's widowed sister, Marie Margarethe Louise Wiethorn and her two daughters, and a son and two daughters of his oldest brother, Friedrich Heinrich Gaskamp, all came to Texas from Haldem, Westphalia. Christian Gaskamp died at the age of 72 years in the Zionsville Community of Washington County, Texas. He was buried in the Zion Lutheran Church Cemetery of Zionsville. Christian's tombstone states that he died 29 June 1906, but the records of Zion Lutheran Church state he died 24 June 1906, and was buried 25 June 1906. Christian's widow, Margarethe Gaskamp nee Schmedthorst, died at the family homeplace in Zionsville on 17 June 1914, at the age of 77 years. She was buried in the Zion Lutheran Church Cemetery on 18 June 1914.

***The seven sons of Christian and Margarethe Gaskamp:***

**Friedrich August Heinrich "Fritz" Gaskamp** born 11 Feb. 1861, in Haldem, Westphalia, Germany. Fritz was baptized 24 Feb. 1861, in the Lutheran Church Parish in Dielingen, Westphalia, Germany, and he was confirmed 1 Jan. 1875, at Zion Lutheran Church in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. Fritz Gaskamp married **Engel Louise Sophie Kettler** on 28 Dec. 1883, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. Sophie Kettler was born 21 Aug. 1856, in Arrenkamp, Westphalia, Germany. She was →

baptized 31 Aug. 1856, and confirmed 2 April 1871, in the Lutheran Church Parish in Dielingen, Westphalia, Germany. Fritz and Sophie Gaskamp lived in Washington County until 1904 when they moved to Mosheim in Coryell County, Texas, where they settled. Fritz Gaskamp was a charter member of the St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mosheim, which was established in 1912. Sophie Gaskamp nee Kettler died in Mosheim on 23 Nov. 1927, at the age of 71 years. Fritz Gaskamp died at his home in Mosheim on 24 Dec. 1935, at the age of 74 years, during the pneumonia epidemic. Fritz and Sophie Gaskamp are buried in the St. James Lutheran Cemetery at Mosheim. (Note: St. James Lutheran Church closed its doors in 1950 and merged with Trinity Lutheran Church in Clifton, Texas. The St. James Lutheran Cemetery is today on private land).

**Fritz and Sophie Gaskamp had eight children:**

1. **Margaretha Wilhelmine Elise "Louise" Gaskamp** born 29 Oct. 1884, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 18 Oct. 1970, in Clifton, Bosque Co., Texas. Louise married a young widower, **Fritz Kleibrink**, on 27 Oct. 1913. Fritz was born 7 March 1881, in Wehdem, Westphalia, Germany, and died 8 Feb. 1962, in Clifton, Tx. Louise and Fritz Kleibrink are buried in the Clifton Cemetery in Clifton, Texas.
2. **Mina Karoline Margarethe Engel Gaskamp** born 20 Dec. 1886, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 20 Jan. 1952, in Coryell City, Coryell Co., Texas. She married **Philip Lander** on 9 Nov. 1916. Philip was born 22 March 1897, at Prairie Chapel, Coryell Co., Tex., and died 30 Sept. 1965, in Clifton, Texas. Mina and Philip Lander are buried in the St. John Lutheran Cemetery at Coryell City, Coryell Co., Texas.
3. **Emma Elise Henriette Gaskamp** born 19 July 1888, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 18 July 1889, in Zionsville.
4. **August Christian Heinrich Gaskamp** born 16 Jan. 1890, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 27 Dec. 1935, in a hospital in Waco, Texas, during the pneumonia epidemic, which also took the life of his youngest son, Lonnie, and of his father, Fritz. August Gaskamp married **Marie Symank** on 21 Nov. 1912. Marie, or Mary, was born 2 Dec. 1890, in Moffat, Texas, and she died in Clifton, Texas, on 17 Dec. 1964. August and Mary Gaskamp are buried in the St. John Lutheran Cemetery at Coryell City, Coryell Co., Texas. (Note: August Gaskamp was originally buried in the St. James Lutheran Cemetery at Mosheim, but after the church closed in 1950, Mary had his remains moved to St. John Lutheran Cemetery at Coryell City).
5. **Bertha Mina Engel Henriette Gaskamp** born 10 July 1891, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 1 Jan. 1953, in Clifton, Bosque Co., Texas. Bertha married **August Schraeder** on 19 Nov. 1914. August was born 20 June 1893, in Long Point, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 25 June 1979, in Clifton, Texas. Bertha and August Schraeder are buried in the St. John Lutheran Cemetery at Coryell City, Coryell Co., Texas.
6. **Anna Louise Sophie Gaskamp** born 30 March 1893, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 19 Jan. 1971, in San Angelo, Tom Green Co., Texas. Anna married a widower, **Fredrick Henry "Fritz" Haverland** on 7 Nov. 1928. Fritz was born 12 July 1889, in Lee Co., Texas, and he died 14 Aug. 1957, in San Angelo, Texas. Anna and Fritz Haverland are buried in the Protestant Cemetery in Rowena, Runnels Co., Texas.
7. **Albert Heinrich Wilhelm Gaskamp** born 21 March 1896, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 27 Oct. 1975, in Clifton, Bosque Co., Texas. Albert Gaskamp married **Annie Haverland** on 25 Nov. 1920. Annie was born 25 June 1898, in Taylor, Texas, and she died 8 March 1974, in Valley Mills, Bosque Co., Texas. Albert and Annie Gaskamp are buried in the Trinity Lutheran Cemetery in Clifton, Texas.
8. **Adolf Wilhelm August Gaskamp** born 10 April 1898, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 16 May 1985, in Clifton, Bosque Co., Texas. Adolf Gaskamp married **Matilda Sophie Lydia Kasting** on 18 Jan. 1923. Matilda was born 17 Sept. 1901, in New Wehdem, Austin Co., Texas, and she died 21 Dec. 1982, in Clifton, Texas. Adolf and Matilda Gaskamp are buried in the Clifton Memorial Park in Clifton, Texas. →





Family of Fritz Gaskamp and Sophie (Kettler) Gaskamp  
*Front row from left:*  
 Fritz Gaskamp, Sophie Kettler Gaskamp, August Gaskamp  
*Middle row from left:* Albert & Adolph Gaskamp  
*Back row from left:* Anna (m. Haverland), Bertha (m. Schraeder) Mina (m. Lander) and Louise (m. Kleibrink)

Fritz Gaskamp was the oldest son of Christian Gaskamp

**Heinrich Christian Wilhelm "Henry" Gaskamp** born 8 April 1863, in Haldem, Westphalia, Germany. Henry was baptized 19 April 1863, in the Lutheran Church Parish in Dielingen, Westphalia, Germany, and he was confirmed 27 March 1877, in Zion Lutheran Church in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. Henry Gaskamp married his first cousin, **Margarethe Wilhelmine Louise Schmedthorst**, on 28 Dec. 1883, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. They married in a double-ceremony with Henry's older brother, Fritz, and his bride, Sophie Kettler. Margarethe was born 3 Dec. 1857, in Haldem, Westphalia, Germany; she was the daughter of **August Friedrich Heinrich Schmedthorst and Henriette Louise Dorothea Stickan**. Margarethe was baptized 20 Dec. 1857, and she was confirmed 24 March 1872, in the Lutheran Church Parish in Dielingen, Westphalia, Germany. Henry and Margarethe Gaskamp lived in the Zionsville Community of Washington County, Texas, until 1903 when they moved to the William Penn Community in eastern Washington County where they settled. They became members of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church of William Penn. Margarethe Gaskamp nee Schmedthorst died at the family homeplace in William Penn on 24 May 1917, at the age of 59 years. Henry Gaskamp died 14 years later, also at the family homeplace in William Penn, on 15 Oct. 1931, at the age of 68 years. Henry and Margarethe Gaskamp are buried in the Bethlehem Lutheran Cemetery in the William Penn Community of Washington County, Texas.

**Henry and Margarethe Gaskamp had four children:**

1. **Sophia Margaretha Louise Gaskamp** born 25 Oct. 1885, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died in William Penn Community, Washington Co., Texas, on 31 Aug. 1960. Sophie married **Fritz Kohring** on 16 Jan. 1904. Fritz was born 18 Dec. 1878, in Germany, and he died 2 May 1974. Sophie and Fritz Kohring are buried in the Bethlehem Lutheran Cemetery in William Penn, Washington Co., Texas.
2. **Minna Margaretha Engel Gaskamp** born 22 Oct. 1887, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died in Brenham, Texas, on 1 Oct. 1974. Minnie never married. She is buried in the Bethlehem Lutheran Cemetery in William Penn, Washington Co., Texas.
3. **Emma Henriette Minna Gaskamp** born 9 June 1889, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. Emma's death date is not known, but she died as a small girl in Zionsville.
4. **Otto Gaskamp** born 5 Feb. 1891, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died in William Penn, Washington Co., Texas, on 29 Nov. 1964. Otto Gaskamp married **Emma Rosenbaum** on 16 Jan. 1913. Emma was born 13 Nov. 1890, in Washington Co., Texas, and she died 20 March 1966. Otto and Emma Gaskamp are buried in the Bethlehem Lutheran Cemetery in William Penn.

**Carl Friedrich Wilhelm "Bill" Gaskamp** born 19 August 1865, in Haldem, Westphalia, Germany. Bill was baptized 3 September 1865 in the Lutheran Church Parish in Dielingen, Westphalia, Germany. Bill Gaskamp was confirmed 10 April 1881, in Zion Lutheran Church in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, by Pastor Gottfried Jordan. Pastor Jordan made the following note in the Zion Lutheran records: *"In addition to these, Wilhelm Gaskamp, son of Ch. Gaskamp, born on 19 August 1865, baptized in Germany, was also confirmed. However, because he is deaf and mute, he could not take part in the instruction. His confirmation occurred at his most fervent wish and out of the conviction that God's spirit had moved in him and thus he could not be refused."* Pastor G. Jordan Bill Gaskamp never married. He lived his life on the Gaskamp homestead with his youngest brother, George and family. Bill was remembered as being an avid domino player. Bill Gaskamp died at the home of his niece, Meta Gaskamp Glaesmann, in the Zionsville Community on 19 September 1963, at the age of 98 years. Bill was buried in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery of Zionsville on 20 September 1963.



Wilhelm (Bill) Gaskamp on his 90th birthday, August 19, 1955. Bill lived to the age of 98 years. Bill was the third son of Christian Gaskamp.

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**Christian Wilhelm August Gaskamp** born 4 April 1868, in Haldem, Westphalia, Germany. August was baptized in the Lutheran Church Parish in Dielingen, Westphalia, and he was confirmed 1 April 1883, in Zion Lutheran Church in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. August Gaskamp married **Wilhelmine Charlotte Karoline Wehmeyer** on 27 Nov. 1890, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. Wilhelmine, or Minnie, was born 6 Aug. 1870, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas; she was the daughter of Hermann Wehmeyer and Auguste Louise Reddehase. Minnie was baptized 19 Feb. 1871, and she was confirmed 6 April 1884, at Zion Lutheran Church of Zionsville. August and Minnie Gaskamp lived their married life in the Zionsville Community of Washington County where they farmed and were members of Zion Lutheran Church. They were married for 57 years when August died in a hospital in Brenham on 31 July 1948, at the age of 80 years. Minnie Gaskamp nee Wehmeyer died at the home of her son, Paul Gaskamp, in the Long Point Community of Washington County on 28 July 1956, at the age of 85. August and Minnie Gaskamp are buried in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. **August and Minnie Gaskamp had four children:**

1. **Emma Elise Margaretha Gaskamp** born 16 Nov. 1891, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died in Brenham, Texas, on 9 June 1973. Emma married **Julius Robert Weidner** on 29 Feb. 1912. Julius was born 2 Feb. 1888, in Salem Community, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 31 Jan. 1950. Emma and Julius Weidner are buried in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery of Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas.
2. **Edwin Christian Hermann Heinrich Gaskamp** born 23 Sept. 1893, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died in Brenham, Texas, on 10 Feb. 1978. Edwin married **Emma Wilhelmine Leontine Glaesmann** on 9 Nov. 1916. Emma was born 4 Feb. 1897, in Long Point, Washington Co., Texas, and she died in Brenham, Texas, on 18 July 1987. Edwin and Emma Gaskamp are buried in the St. Peter's Lutheran Cemetery at Gay Hill, Washington Co., Texas.
3. **Theodor Friedrich Wilhelm Gaskamp** born 14 Nov. 1896, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 22 Nov. 1975, in Brenham, Texas. Theodor married **Selma Henriette Louise Holle** on 17 Nov. 1921. Selma was born 20 Oct. 1899, in Zionsville, and she died 30 May 1982, in Brenham. Theodor and Selma Gaskamp are buried in the Zion Lutheran



Cemetery in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas.

4. **Paul Heinrich Friedrich Gaskamp** born 22 Sept. 1900, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died in a hospital in Houston, Texas, on 3 June 1967. Paul Gaskamp married **Hedwig Anna Drews** on 29 Oct. 1925. Hedwig was born 6 Jan. 1905, in Zionsville, Texas, and she died 26 Oct. 1985, in Brenham. Paul and Hedwig Gaskamp are buried in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas.

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**Heinrich Hermann Gaskamp** born 20 December 1874, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas.

Hermann was baptized 31 January 1875, and he was confirmed in 1889, at Zion Lutheran Church of Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. Hermann Gaskamp married **Henriette Kokemoor** on 23 December 1897, in Zionsville. Henriette was born in Oppendorf, Westphalia, Germany, on 19 October 1876; she was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Karl Kokemoor. Henriette was baptized and confirmed in the Lutheran faith in Germany. She came to Texas with her family at the age of 17 years. The Kokemoor family settled first in Austin County before moving to Washington County. Hermann and Henriette Gaskamp lived their married life in the Zionsville Community where they farmed. They were members of Zion Lutheran Church of Zionsville. Hermann Gaskamp died at his home in the Zionsville Community on 7 September 1936, at the age of 61 years. Henriette Gaskamp nee Kokemoor died at the home of her daughter, Ida Wiegmann, at Thorndale, Milam Co., Texas, on 16 March 1954, at the age of 77 years. Hermann and Henriette Gaskamp are buried in the Zion Lutheran Church Cemetery at Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas.

**Hermann and Henriette Gaskamp had 10 children:**

1. **Ida Margarethe Sophie Wilhelmine Gaskamp** born 1 Sept. 1899, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 19 Feb. 1997, in Kingsland, Llano Co., Texas. Ida married **Otto Christian Wiegmann** on 17 Jan. 1928. Otto was born 14 Jan. 1890, and he died 26 Aug. 1967, in Thorndale, Texas. Ida and Otto Wiegmann are buried in the St. John Lutheran Cemetery at Detmold, Milam Co., Texas
2. **Caroline Margarethe Henriette Gaskamp** born 30 Aug. 1901, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 27 Sept. 1992, in Brenham, Texas. Caroline Gaskamp married **Joseph Albert Schmitt** on 26 Dec. 1922. Joe Schmitt was born 17 Sept. 1896, and he died 6 Sept. 1958, in Brenham. Caroline and Joe Schmitt are buried in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery at Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas.
3. **Robert Friedrich Wilhelm Gaskamp** born 11 Dec. 1903, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 10 Nov. 1975, in Brenham, Texas. Robert Gaskamp married **Ida Malinda Mathilda Rodenbeck** on 24 Dec. 1923. Ida was born 23 Nov. 1902, in Washington Co., Texas, and she died 13 Nov. 1990, in Brenham, Texas. Robert and Ida Gaskamp are buried in the Prairie Lea Cemetery in Brenham, Texas.
4. **Otto Heinrich Wilhelm Gaskamp** born 7 Feb. 1906, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 26 Nov. 1967, in Brenham, Texas. Otto Gaskamp married **Lillian Lena Rodenbeck** on 11 Dec. 1929. Lillian was born 31 Aug. 1910, in Washington Co., Texas, and she died 27 June 1966, in Bellville, Texas. Otto and Lillian Gaskamp are buried in the Prairie Lea Cemetery in Brenham.
5. **Wilhelmine (Minnie) Henriette Louise Gaskamp** born 22 March 1908, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 28 Feb. 1985, in Brenham, Texas. Minnie married **Henry Struckmeyer** on 17 Dec. 1930. Henry Struckmeyer was born 20 Jan. 1906, in Washington Co., Texas, and he died 31 March 1969, in Brenham, Texas. Minnie and Henry Struckmeyer are buried in the Prairie Lea Cemetery in Brenham, Texas.
6. **Gustav August Otto Gaskamp** born 23 Sept. 1910, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 10 Aug. 2003, in Houston, Texas. Gus Gaskamp married #1. **Louise Haarmeyer** on 11 Nov. 1937. Louise was born 29 Dec. 1918, in Washington Co., Texas, and she died 16 May 1965, in Houston. Louise is buried in the Woodlawn Garden of Memories Cemetery in Houston. Gus married #2. **Leola Antonie Reimer** on 2 Sept. 1967. Leola was born 18 June 1913, →

- and she died 10 Sept. 1985, in Houston. Gus married #3. **Lois Pritchett** on 17 March 1988. Gus Gaskamp is buried in the Woodlawn Garden of Memories Cemetery in Houston, Texas.
7. **Emma Gaskamp** born and died 18 March 1913, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. Emma is buried in Zion Lutheran Cemetery in Zionsville.
  8. **Nora Emilie Bertha Gaskamp** born 19 Jan. 1915, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 25 Sept. 1990, in Brenham, Texas. Nora married **John H. Scherbring** on 14 Feb. 1947. John Scherbring was born 30 March 1912, and he died 31 May 1977, in Houston, Texas. Nora and John Scherbring are buried in the Forest Park West Cemetery in Houston, Texas.
  9. **Herman Georg Julius Gaskamp** born 15 Nov. 1917, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 8 Oct. 2008, in Caldwell, Burleson Co., Texas. Herman married **Tomelane Jackson** on 21 Dec. 1947. Tomelane was born 22 March 1926, in Burleson Co., Texas. Herman Gaskamp is buried in the Hix Cemetery in Burleson County, Texas.
  10. **Bruno Friedrich Hermann Louis Gaskamp** born 13 June 1921, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 13 Dec. 1984, in Perryton, Ochiltree Co., Texas. Bruno Gaskamp married **JoAnn Wilt** on 2 June 1951. JoAnn was born 1 June 1932. Rev. Bruno Gaskamp is buried in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas.

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**Heinrich Phillip Karl "Charlie" Gaskamp** born 24 February 1877, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. Charlie was baptized 8 April 1877, and he was confirmed 22 March 1891, at Zion Lutheran Church of Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. Charlie Gaskamp married **Sophie Wilhelmine "Minnie" Henriette Kettler** on 8 December 1898, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. Minnie was born 30 April 1876, in Haldem, Westphalia, Germany; she was the daughter of Hermann Heinrich Wilhelm Kettler and Margarethe Wilhelmine Sophie Schutter. Minnie was baptized 21 May 1876, and she was confirmed 20 April 1890, in the Lutheran Church Parish in Dielingen, Westphalia, Germany. Minnie came with her family to Texas in 1894 when she was 18 years old. Charlie and Minnie Gaskamp lived the first years of their marriage in Washington County until they moved to Mosheim in Coryell County, Texas, in 1906. In 1912, they moved to the Womack Community in Bosque County, Texas, where they settled and farmed. They became members of the Womack Evangelical Church (today, it is known as the Womack United Church of Christ). Minnie Gaskamp nee Kettler died at her home in the Womack Community of Bosque County, Texas, on 26 July 1959, at the age of 83 years. Minnie and Charlie were married 60 years at the time of her death. Charlie Gaskamp died in a hospital in Clifton, Texas, on 28 March 1973, at the age of 96 years. Charlie and Minnie Gaskamp are buried in the Clifton Memorial Park in Clifton, Bosque County, Texas. **Charlie and Minnie Gaskamp had seven children:**

1. **Lina Margarethe Sophia Henriette Gaskamp** born 28 April 1902, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died in a nursing home in McGregor, McLennan Co., Texas, on 20 Aug. 1989. Lina married **William Richard "Bill" Hennig** on 15 Dec. 1923. Bill Hennig was born 7 Jan. 1902, and he died 30 Oct. 1982. Lina and Bill Hennig are buried in the Clifton Memorial Park in Clifton, Texas.
2. **Sophie Margarethe Karoline Gaskamp** born 28 May 1905, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 4 Nov. 1992, in Clifton, Texas. Sophie married **Richard Carl Hennig** on 11 April 1927. Richard Hennig was born 7 Jan. 1904, and he died 16 June 1983. Sophie and Richard Hennig are buried in the Clifton Memorial Park in Clifton, Texas.
3. **Wilhelm "Willie" Fritz Gaskamp** born 19 Feb. 1908, in Mosheim, Coryell Co., Texas, and he died 28 Sept. 2000, in Clifton, Bosque Co., Texas. Willie never married. He is buried in the Clifton Memorial Park in Clifton, Texas.
4. **Bernhardt "Bennie" August Henry Gaskamp** born 22 Feb. 1910, in Mosheim, Coryell Co., Texas, and he died 10 Nov. 1984, in Clifton, Bosque Co., Texas. Bennie never married. He is buried in the Clifton Memorial Park in Clifton.
5. **Maria "Mary" Mina Louise Gaskamp** born 1 July 1911, in Mosheim, Coryell Co., Texas, →



she died 19 Sept. 2007 in Clifton, Bosque Co., Texas. Mary married **Harold Samuel Spitzer** on 8 Dec. 1937. Harold Spitzer was born 1 Dec. 1911, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 29 Nov. 1974, in Clifton, Bosque Co., Texas. Mary and Harold Spitzer are buried in the Clifton Memorial Park in Clifton, Texas.

6. **Ella Marie Emma Gaskamp** born 16 Aug. 1913, at Womack, Bosque Co., Texas, and she died 15 Feb 1993, in Clifton, Bosque Co., Texas. Ella married **Herman Gustav Zuehlke** on 28 Nov. 1934. Herman Zuehlke was born 30 Sept. 1911, and he died in Clifton, Texas, on 21 June 1986. Ella and Herman Zuehlke are buried in the Clifton Memorial Park in Clifton, Texas.

7. **Clara Louise Ella Gaskamp** born 17 July 1916, at Womack, Bosque Co., Texas, and she died 12 Oct. 2001, in Houston, Harris Co., Texas. Clara married **Arnold Friedrich Spitzer** on 29 June 1946. Arnold Spitzer was born 25 Dec. 1915, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 25 Nov. 1980, in Houston, Texas. Clara and Arnold Spitzer are buried in Memorial Oaks Cemetery in Houston.

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**George Heinrich Wilhelm Gaskamp** born 26 July 1879, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. George was baptized 10 Aug. 1879, and he was confirmed 2 April 1893, at Zion Lutheran Church in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. George Gaskamp married **Minna Kohring** on 5 December 1901, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. Minna was born at Quernheim near Lemforde, Germany on 19 Nov. 1877; she was the daughter of **Frederick Kohring** and **Sophia Lampe**. Minna was 14 years of age when her family came to Texas. The Kohring Family first lived in the Welcome Community in Austin County before moving to Washington County. George and Minna Gaskamp lived their married life on the Gaskamp homeplace in the Zionsville Community of Washington County, Texas. They were members of Zion Lutheran Church of Zionsville. In later years, they resided with their oldest daughter, Meta Glaesmann, before moving to a rest home in Brenham. Minna Gaskamp nee Kohring died in Brenham on 1 February 1978, at the age of 100 years. Minna and George had been married 76 years at the time of her death. George Gaskamp died in Brenham on 6 May 1980, at the age of 100 years. George was the last surviving son of Christian and Margarethe Gaskamp. George and Minna Gaskamp are buried in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery in Zionsville, Washington County, Texas.

Mr., and Mrs. George Gaskamp had their 72nd wedding anniversary Dec. 5, 1973. Mrs. Gaskamp came over from Germany, when she was 14 years old. He was born here. They were married in the Zion Lutheran Church in 1901.

This picture was taken in 1970; They made their home with their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Emil Glaesman for six years. In January, 1973, they moved to the Brenham Rest Home. Mrs. Gaskamp is 96, and Mr. Gaskamp 94.

They had 11 children, eight are still living, namely, Mrs. Emil Glaesman of Brenham, Mrs. Otto Blum of Burton, Mrs. Alvin Klander of Riesel, Mrs. Alvin Bredthauer of Stanford; Mrs. Otto Glenz of Brenham. Mrs. Gilbert Keim of Waco, Rudolph Gaskamp of Waco and Herbert Gaskamp of Brenham.

Those deceased are Frieda, Ed and Reinhardt Gaskamp. They have 22 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren, Three of the great grandchildren are married.

Mr. and Mrs. Gaskamp are members of the Zionsville Lutheran Church. They lived in that area all of their life. They are both bed-ridden now, but still like to hear about things going on.

### George Gaskamps Mark 72nd Anniversary



This picture and article appeared in the December 12, 1973 edition of the *Brenham Banner-Press*.

George Gaskamp was the youngest son of Christian and Margarethe Gaskamp. George and Minnie Gaskamp were married 76 years and both reached the age of 100 years. George and Minnie were the parents of 12 children; one died in infancy. Of their 11 children that grew to adulthood, only five daughters and one son survived their parents. George and Minnie survived two of their adult daughters and three of their sons. →

**George and Minna Gaskamp had 12 children:**

1. **Meta Margarethe Charlotte Sophie Gaskamp** born 2 Feb. 1903, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 2 Oct. 1997, in Brenham, Texas. Meta married **Emil Eduaard Glaesmann** on 22 Nov. 1923. Emil Glaesmann was born 16 March 1900, in Long Point, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 11 Nov. 1988, in Brenham. Meta and Emil Glaesmann are buried in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas.
2. **Frieda Margarethe Maria Louise Gaskamp** born 9 July 1904, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 23 Sept. 1951, in Zionsville. Frieda never married. She is buried in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery in Zionsville.
3. **Edward Fritz Heinrich Gaskamp** born 2 March 1906, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 21 July 1963, in Brenham, Texas. Ed. Gaskamp married **Sophia Ida Hilda Reue** on 18 Oct. 1928. Hilda was born 30 Dec. 1905, in Prairie Hill, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 9 Sept. 1962, in Brenham. Ed. and Hilda Gaskamp are buried in the St. John Lutheran Cemetery in Prairie Hill, Washington Co., Texas.
4. **Infant Gaskamp** born and died 2 Feb. 1907, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. This baby was buried 3 Feb. 1907, in Zion Lutheran Cemetery in Zionsville.
5. **Rudolf Heinrich Wilhelm Gaskamp** born 20 Dec. 1907, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 19 Oct. 1975, in Waco, McLennan Co., Texas. Rudolf Gaskamp married **Erma Buck** on 26 Jan. 1933. Erma was born 5 Oct. 1915, in Washington Co., Texas, and she died 26 July 1996, in Waco, Texas. Rudolf and Erma Gaskamp are buried in the Waco Memorial Park in Waco.
6. **Reinhardt August Friedrich Gaskamp** born 13 April 1909, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 18 June 1948, in Long Point, Washington Co., Texas. Reinhardt Gaskamp married **Norma Maria Christine Minna Schwarze** on 21 May 1934. Norma was born 19 Feb. 1911, at Sandy Hill, Washington Co., Texas, and she died in Brenham, Texas, on 20 July 1979. Reinhardt and Norma Gaskamp are buried in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas.
7. **Lydia Louise Mina Sophie Gaskamp** born 16 Oct. 1911, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died at her home in Burton, Washington Co., Texas, on 6 April 1994. Lydia married **Otto Fritz Wilhelm Bluhm** on 10 Nov. 1932. Otto Bluhm was born 13 Oct. 1911, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 28 June 1997, in Houston, Texas. Lydia and Otto Bluhm are buried in the St. John United Church of Christ Cemetery at Burton, Texas.
8. **Selma Henriette Else Louise Gaskamp** born 1 Dec. 1913, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died in Waco, McLennan Co., Texas, on 9 Nov. 1999. Selma married **Alvin Gustav Klander** on 28 Nov. 1934. Alvin Klander was born 26 Aug. 1909, at Riesel, Texas, and he died 28 Jan. 1989, in Waco, Texas. Selma and Alvin Klander are buried in the Trinity Lutheran Cemetery near Riesel, Texas.
9. **Laura Emma Malinda Meta Gaskamp** born 3 Dec. 1915, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 16 July 2000, in Brenham, Texas. Laura married **Otto Henry Wilhelm Glenz** on 5 Nov. 1936. Otto Glenz was born 25 Dec. 1913, at Sandy Hill, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 7 March 1978, in Brenham, Texas. Laura and Otto Glenz are buried in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas.
10. **Adela Minna Ida Gaskamp** born 26 Feb. 1917, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and she died 11 March 1974, at M.D. Anderson Cancer Hospital in Houston, Texas. Adela married **Alvin Bredthauer** on 23 Feb. 1938. Alvin Bredthauer was born 1 Dec. 1913, at Rehburg, Washington Co., Texas. Adela Gaskamp Bredthauer is buried in the Highland Cemetery in Stamford, Jones Co., Texas.
11. **Herbert Hermann Wilhelm Heinrich Gaskamp** born 22 Nov. 1918, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas, and he died 10 Feb. 1982, in Brenham, Texas. Herbert Gaskamp married **Elaste Schulze** on 14 Nov. 1948. Elaste was born 28 July 1928, in Washington Co., Texas, and she died 1 Feb. 1976. Herbert and Elaste Gaskamp are buried in the Zion Lutheran . →



Cemetery in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas

12. **Adeline Emma Erva Alvine Gaskamp** born 25 Jan. 1920, in Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas. Adeline married **Gilbert Kelm** on 1 Nov. 1939. Gilbert Kelm was born 29 Aug. 1916, in Washington Co., Texas, and he died in Waco, Texas, on 8 Aug. 1984. Gilbert Kelm is buried in the Waco Memorial Park in Waco, Texas. Adeline Gaskamp Kelm is residing in Waco, Texas, and she is the last surviving grandchild of Christian and Margarethe (Schmedthorst) Gaskamp.

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Sources: Katherine Kitzler Stephens of Tulia, Texas; Gilbert Londenberg of Riesel, Texas; Marilyn Kohring Klussmann and Delores Addicks Gaskamp of Brenham, Texas; and my late great-aunt, Lydia Bode Grudziecki.

Church records of Zion Lutheran Church of Zionsville, Washington Co., Texas; Bethlehem Lutheran Church of William Penn, Washington Co., Texas; Zion United Church of Christ of Womack, Bosque Co., Texas; St. John Lutheran Church of Prairie Hill, Washington Co., Texas Cemetery inscriptions from Washington, Coryell, and Bosque County cemeteries.

Newspaper archives from *The Brenham-Banner Press* in the Blinn College Library in Brenham; *The Waco Tribune-Herald* in the Waco Public Library; and the Clifton Newspaper from the Bosque County Historical Society.

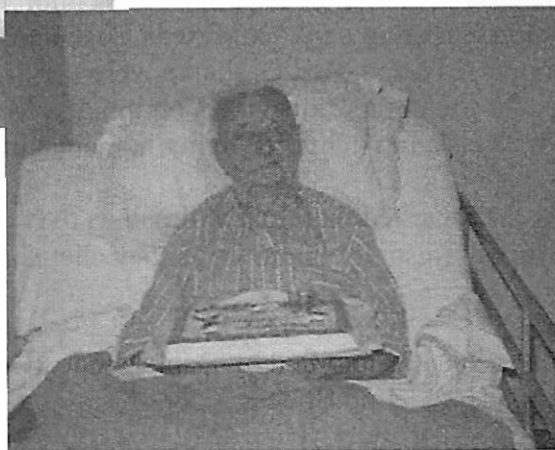
Microfilm records from the Lutheran Church in Dielingen, Westphalia, Germany, obtained through the Church of Latter-Day Saints.

Submitted by **Daniel Bode of Dayton, Texas-a Gaskamp descendant through my great-great-grandmother, Agnes (Gaskamp) Haferkamp, a sister of Christian Gaskamp**



Minna Gaskamp nee Kohring on her 100th birthday, Nov. 19, 1977, Brenham, Texas. Minna is pictured with her five surviving children, Selma Klander, Laura Glenz, Adeline Kelm, Lydia Bluhm, Meta Glaesmann and Herbert Gaskamp.

Selma Gaskamp Klander and her husband, Alvin Klander. Selma was a daughter of George & Minna Gaskamp and a granddaughter of Christian & Margarethe Gaskamp



George Gaskamp on his 100th birthday, July 26, 1979 in Brenham, Texas



This article was written by William O'Shea, Managing Editor, of *The Brenham BannerPress*. This article is from the December 6, 1976, issue of the newspaper:

### **Rare Blessing —**

## **Brenham Couple Celebrates 75th Wedding Anniversary**

In a rare blessing enjoyed by few people, Mr. and Mrs. George Gaskamp of Brenham celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary Sunday, Dec. 5. Five generations of the Gaskamp family along with numerous friends joined in the celebration held at the Brenham Rest Home.

Rev. R. J. Weber, former pastor of the Zion Lutheran Church in the Zionsville Community and present pastor Rev. James Witschorke where the honored couple hold memberships, conducted a brief religious service. The highlight of the open house event was the reading of a letter from President and Mrs. Gerald R. Ford. The letter to Mr. and Mrs. Gaskamp from the White House and signed by President Ford, said, "Mrs. Ford and I were happy to learn that you will be celebrating your 75th wedding anniversary. "Your devotion to each other is an example which surely has won you the admiration of all who know you. We can imagine your happiness as your family and friends gather to share this important and very special day. "With our congratulations and warm wishes always."

Mr. and Mrs. Gaskamp were visibly elated by the kind expressions of the President and Mrs. Ford. While confined to their beds, Mr. and Mrs. Gaskamp are in remarkable physical and mental conditions for their ages. Mrs. Gaskamp, 99, the former Miss Minnie Kohring was born on Nov. 19, 1877 in Quernheim near Lemforde, Germany. She came to America and settled in the Welcome Community with her parents when she was 14 years old. Mr. Gaskamp, 97, was born on July 26, 1879 at Zionsville. The couple were married on Dec. 5, 1901 in the Zionsville Lutheran Church by Pastor Stricker. Mr. and Mrs. Gaskamp lived on a farm near Burton where they were engaged in farming for most of their lives until they retired. For six years they made their home with a daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Emil Glaesmann until 1973 when they moved to the Brenham Rest Home. They are the parents of 11 children, have 22 grandchildren; 28 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren.

Their surviving daughters and one son include: Mrs. Emil Glaesmann of Brenham; Mrs. Otto Blum of Burton; Mrs. Alvin Klander of Riese1; Mrs. Otto Glenz of Brenham; Mrs. Gilbert Kelm of Waco and Herbert Gaskamp of Brenham. The children deceased are: Mrs. Adella Bredthauer of Stamford; Rudolph Gaskamp of Waco; Frieda Gaskamp, Ed Gaskamp and Reinhardt Gaskamp. A devoted family couple, Mr. and Mrs. Gaskamp were very active in church and community service during a long and useful life in the Zionsville Community. Mr. Gaskamp's hobby was fishing when time permitted while Mrs. Gaskamp delighted in her homemaking activities.

As they marked their many blessings over a long and happy life together, Mr. and Mrs. Gaskamp look with optimism to the future as they cherish the memories of their Diamond Wedding Anniversary.

Retyped and submitted by Daniel Bode. George Gaskamp was a first cousin to my great grandmother, Anna Haferkamp Bode.

**END**





Need a little more fun in life with an enormous German flair? Then mark your calendars and join Weimar residents and visitors May 8-9 for the Gedenke German Festival. This year's event includes more German music, dancing, flags and décor, German Exhibit, Biergarten and German food than ever and promises fun for all ages. Showcasing this event is The Jubilee Polka Band from the New Braunfels/San Antonio area. Established in 1988, the band will be in German costume and plays traditional European German music, polkas, waltzes, and some pop and country. Members include Urban Kneupper—leader/accordion, Louis (Pinky) Davis, Dean Shilling, Robert Guenther, Richard Naujoks, and Al Tapia.

*The Fayette County Record*, February 6, 2009

**Submitted by Rodney Koenig, Houston**

## German Internees in America

The World War II experience of thousands of German Americans, to most, is an unknown history. During World War II, the U.S. government and many Americans viewed German Americans and others of "enemy ancestry" as potentially dangerous—particularly recent immigrants. The government used many interrelated, constitutionally questionable methods to control persons of German ancestry, including internment, individual and group exclusion from military zones, internee exchanges, deportation, repatriation, "alien enemy" registration, travel restrictions and property confiscation. The human cost of these civil liberties violations was high: families were disrupted, if not destroyed; reputations ruined; homes and belongings lost. By the end of the war 11,000 persons of German ancestry, including many American-born children, were interned. Pressured by the United States, Latin American governments collectively arrested at least 4,050 German Latin Americans. Most were shipped in dark boat holds to the United States and interned. At least 2,000 Germans, German Americans and Latin American internees were later exchanged for Americans and Latin Americans held in the Third Reich.

The mission of many former internees and their families is to tell the stories of thousands whose lives were forever changed because the United States suspected them of disloyalty. Government suspicion was based upon national origin and led to great hardship: their story must not be forgotten; it deserves to be told. To date, it remains shrouded in history.

*(from [www.traces.org](http://www.traces.org); adapted from Arthur D. Jacobs' research <http://foitimes.com/internment/>)*

### The Eiserlohs' Story

*by Ensila Eiserloh Bennett, as edited by Karen Ebel*

Mathias and Johanna Eiserloh met in Johanna's hometown of Idstein, Germany after WWI, where Mathias was a civil engineering student. They shared a dream of emigrating to America and did so in 1923. They brought with them the hopes and dreams held by most immigrants to this country—to live, work and raise a family in freedom. Mathias' two sisters and three of Johanna's siblings joined them in America soon after.

Life was not as rosy in America as they had imagined it. They endured the struggles typically faced by new immigrants while learning the new language, finding employment and adjusting to the cultural and social differences. They accepted jobs during those early years wherever they could find work. Mathias even worked briefly in the coal mines of West Virginia. Eventually, Mathias found a job in his chosen profession. In 1929 they rewarded themselves by vacationing in Europe, traveling and visiting family. In October, days before their return, the stock market crashed. They came home to face financial turmoil and the Depression. Eventually, after struggling to recoup their losses, they purchased two acres of land in a rural area outside Cleveland, Ohio.

Mathias, who had also studied architecture, designed and drew up plans for a home, which the couple literally built with their own hands, while living in a tent on the property. With the help of friends, they dug the basement, mixed and poured cement for the foundation, and built a fine house. They bore three children between 1930 and 1941—all U.S. citizens.



*Mathias & Johanna on their wedding day in Williamsburg, W. VA - December 23, 1923*





*Family photo - taken upon the family's reunion at Crystal City, TX., circa June 1943. Standing in back - eldest daughter, Ingrid, aged 13. Front row: son Lothar, age 9; Johanna, age 42; Ensila, age 3; Mathias, age 48*

During this time Johanna also raised a flock of chickens and started a small business selling the eggs and hens. Life was good, the future looked bright and the children flourished. They attended a German social club largely comprised of other engineers and their families with whom they enjoyed German music and dances and shared common experiences. Such clubs also served as networks for finding jobs and to give support to member families in times of need. While the men would discuss their jobs and politics over a stein of beer and a cigarette, this club was strictly social. It was not a political organization nor did it have any political agenda. Unfortunately, unlike their siblings, the Eiserlohs, busy raising their children and working hard, had not pursued their long-standing plan to apply for U.S. citizenship. Naively, they had considered themselves thoroughly American since their arrival in this country. They were to learn quickly that this mistake and, apparently, their club membership, would cost them everything.

Days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, on December 9, 1941, life as they had known it was destroyed forever. Mathias was suddenly arrested by the FBI at his job and jailed in Cleveland. Their savings were frozen. He was questioned about his membership in the German club, their families here and in Europe, his friends and his job. The government ordered his internment. His arrest and loss of income left Johanna and her three children, ages one, six and eleven, destitute. Neighbors and friends suddenly treated them with astonishing coldness. No one believed that an innocent man would be jailed. They suspected that Mathias "must have done something." The children were harassed with nasty taunts and insults from schoolmates referencing their German heritage.

In desperation, Johanna was forced to sell their home after a few months. Fearing the proceeds from the sale would be frozen, Johanna insisted on a cash sale and found it necessary to accept the paltry sum offered by an opportunistic buyer. Before she could move out, a masked intruder attacked her during the night, demanding "the money" from her. She fought him off with a piece of lead pipe, which she kept under her pillow for protection. Just days earlier Johanna was unnerved because someone shot their two German shepherds. Terrified and badly shaken, she was left partially paralyzed. Mathias' sister gave the family shelter in her cellar and took care of the children while Johanna slowly recovered. A basement fire forced the family to find yet another home. The children were traumatized and missed their father terribly. Despite Johanna's many pleas, the government gave no indication when or if he would be released. Reluctantly she petitioned the government to be allowed to join him in the camp, believing the family would be better off together.

After two long years of suffering the strain and hardship of separation, the family was reunited at the Crystal City, Texas internment camp. Although Johanna and the children were "voluntary internees" they could not leave "voluntarily." They lived in small quarters with very basic necessities. They soon learned from other families in the camp that their story was not unique. Most had been suddenly uprooted and imprisoned, losing home and possessions. Becoming increasingly despaired and bitter, they finally agreed to repatriate to Germany in response to the more than subtle pressures by government officials. In January 1945 they were transported to New York Harbor to board the *S.S. Gripsholm* under a wartime exchange program between Germany and the United States, which provided for U.S. citizens held in Germany to be released in exchange for "Germans" sent back from the United States. The "Germans" being exchanged included many US-born children and spouses who were either US-born or naturalized citizens.



*Family photo taken in summer of 1947, when the two eldest children, Ingrid now age 17 and Lothar, now age 12, departed for America where they would live with their aunt and uncle and continue their US education, believing the family would soon be reunited in the US. The family separation would last for 8 long years. Back row: Johanna, Mathias and Ingrid. Front row: Ensila, age 6, Gunther, age 2, and Lothar.*

of the war.

During the last leg of their journey, U.S. planes strafed their train. Frightened, they huddled under the seats until train stopped. They ran with the other passengers into the adjoining woods as the planes continued gunning the train. An anti-aircraft gun on the last train car was put into action and the family watched, with mixed emotions, as smoke filled the sky where two of the American planes were shot down.

They arrived in Idstein during the first days of March, hungry and exhausted from two months of difficult journeying. They were greeted without enthusiasm and felt most unwelcome. The relatives, like the rest of the country, did not have enough food for themselves, never mind another family of six. Johanna's aging parents could only offer them a small corner in their cellar for living quarters. What little food could be had was primarily bartered for on the black market. The family was by now suffering the symptoms of malnutrition. They were often ill treated, having just arrived from America, and were under constant suspicion by local Nazis and townspeople who could not comprehend why they had returned from America at this time.

Within two weeks of their arrival, six overzealous members of the SS severely beat Mathias in their basement home in full view of his terrified wife and children. The Gestapo arrested Mathias and took him away to an unknown prison, suspecting him of being an undercover spy for the advancing →

Johanna, age 44, was nine months pregnant when they left Crystal City. She gave birth to an infant son, Günther, on January 4, 1945, on the train to New York Harbor and the *SS Gripsholm*. The child's birth certificate lists his place of birth as New Orleans, Louisiana. Although extremely weak from travel and the recent birth, Johanna and her family had to board the *SS Gripsholm* on January 6, 1945 and endure the fourteen-day stormy crossing through the Atlantic war zone. She and her baby, both weak and ill, remained in sickbay throughout the entire voyage. The older children were now 14, 9 and 4 years old.

They and several hundred repatriates disembarked the *SS Gripsholm* at Marseilles, France, after a minor incident with a harbor mine. They were taken by train to Switzerland. While awaiting the exchange, the crates containing the family's belongings, including seasonal clothing carefully selected by Johanna, and items they could use to barter for food, were stolen. The family now had only the clothes they wore and one small suitcase of miscellaneous things.

The exchange took place at Bregenz in early February 1945. The "Germans" were brought to the border on the back of a flatbed truck in small groups. The Eiserlohs waited for hours in the cold until it was their turn to cross. Johanna, carrying the baby, walked with Ensila, following Mathias, Lothar and Ingrid. Their papers were carefully checked and heads counted: two adults, two male children, two female children. The children, all U.S. citizens, were exchanged for other U.S. citizens who walked out to freedom. On the other side, they climbed back onto the open truck and were taken to Aschaffenburg, a town almost completely destroyed by bombs.

Now left on their own and struggling with the sickly infant, the family slowly made their way north across war-ravaged Germany. Amidst bombings and air raids, in dead of a record-breaking winter, they traveled by train when possible, but often they had to walk because the railways were destroyed. Food was hard to come by and they could only hope to find shelter among Johanna's relatives. Their relatives did not expect them, as no communication had been possible since the start



U.S. Military. The family did not know if he was still alive until the end of the war some months later, when he was found, thoroughly questioned and released by the occupying U.S. Army. Ironically, the government that imprisoned him in America and was responsible for his family's predicament probably saved his life. Following the war, the family moved to small a two-room barracks facility. It was sparsely furnished, with beds in one room, a table, four chairs and a small coal stove in the other. It had a sink with cold running water in one corner but no kitchen. From here the family tried to rebuild their lives.

Their application for re-entry to the U.S. immediately after war was repeatedly denied. Finally, in 1947, the two eldest children, Ingrid and Lothar, then ages 17 and 12, were allowed to repatriate to the U.S. with Mathias' sister agreeing to act as their guardian. They did not see their family again for eight years. The Eiserlohs continued to endure years of hunger and deprivation while making countless applications to re-enter the United States. Lothar joined the U.S. Air Force after completing high school and was granted a security clearance to receive nuclear weapons training. Perhaps not coincidentally, his parents and siblings were finally granted re-entry visas to the United States shortly thereafter, in November 1955.



*A Sunday afternoon walk in the German countryside - May 1955 Johanna age 54, Gunther age 10, Ensila age 14*

Now 60 years old, Mathias couldn't find work as a civil engineer. He accepted a low-paying job from which he was forced to retire at 62. After struggling several more years to provide for his wife and two teenagers, he died at age 65 of heart failure. Johanna became a citizen in 1961, and supported herself with the meager earnings from odd jobs until the age of 89 when Alzheimer's robbed her of all past memories. She died in January 1997, at the age of 96. Three children survive today. Günther, who began his life on a train to New York, perished in an automobile accident at the age of 22, after his discharge from the U.S. Navy.

The physical, emotional and psychological trauma the family suffered throughout the years of separations and a deprivation had long lasting effects on all of them and is still being felt by the remaining three children. Ingrid, Lothar and Ensila are still trying to learn why their father was interned but have as yet not been successful in obtaining the government records, which would hopefully answer their questions. They now tell their story to help others understand the travesties permitted under America's "enemy alien" laws in the hope that it will lead to a better understanding and the instituting of measures that will prevent such a recurrence. Those laws, which some argue are necessary during wartime, do not adequately protect innocent immigrants from flagrant miscarriage of justice by overzealous government officials operating under the guise of patriotism.

Thanks to Lothar Eiserloh, Karen Ebel, and TRACES for allowing us to reprint this document)

## Book Review: *We Were Not the Enemy*

Heidi Gurcke Donald

iUniverse, 2006

Paperback, 104 pages with photos

Available: \$12.95 at Amazon.com

ISBN-13 978-0-595-39333-6

by Kevin Mitchell

The uncomfortable history of the forced internment of Japanese-Americans on the West Coast during World War II is well known. But how many Americans know that about 1 percent of the 300,000 German-Americans and legal German residents living in the United States during the second World War were arrested and either swept into internment camps or deported to wartime Germany? Or that about 4,000 German residents living in Latin American countries friendly to the U.S. were also rounded up?

Heidi Gurcke Donald knows. She lived as a small child in one of those camps in the barren west Texas town of Crystal City. Her moving chronicle of her family's gut-wrenching exodus from life in Costa Rica to imprisonment in Texas is drawn from archival research as well as interviews with her elderly mother, the late Starr Gurcke. "Her memories were so painful," writes the author, "that it took over a month of visits to record her recollections, offered in fragments through tears."

Her father, Werner Gurcke, left Hamburg in the 1920s to join some relatives in Costa Rica and start a successful export-import business. California native Starr – a Germanic Languages postgraduate student – met Werner on a trip to Germany while he was visiting relatives. She moved to San Jose, Costa Rica, in 1936 to marry him. One chapter explores Starr's struggles to adapt to a new husband, a different culture, a lack of modern conveniences and even a lengthy visit by Werner's overbearing mother. The young family soon expanded when Heidi and her younger sister, Ingrid, were born.

Although the Gurckes opposed the rise of Hitler's Nazi party, Werner turned up on a business blacklist in the early 40s and had to abandon his business in lieu of subsistence farming. Werner was on a walk one day in 1942 when Costa Rican authorities arrested him. The frantic letter from Starr to her brother and sister-in-law in California expressed her family's predicament:

"Since day before yesterday, Werner has been in the local penitentiary. . . We haven't the remotest idea why they arrested him or what's going to happen to him and the many others there. And they won't let me see anyone to find out the charges against him or to do any explaining. Heidi wakes up at nite screaming, "Papi, Papi," and today is Ingrid's first birthday. . ."

After six months of being held without charges, Werner and his family were put on a ship and sent to an internment camp in a remote community in West Texas. It was all part of a program run by the U.S. State Department with the stated objective of "hemispheric security" and preventing alleged Nazi sympathizers from undermining Latin American allies of the United States.

The Werners spent more than a year-and-a-half at the Crystal City camp, which was a former migrant-labor camp that housed more than 4,700 German and Japanese internees over its three-year history. The Werners tried to make their two-bedroom triplex as comfortable as possible, hanging curtains and building a porch. But they could never ignore the barbed wire or the watchful gazes of armed guards in towers. Classes were established to teach children in their own native languages – Heidi and Ingrid spoke primarily German at the time – and they were allowed occasional visitors. Werner worked in an on-site manufacturing facility and helped managed the maintenance crew.





The Gurcke family was allowed to leave the camp in 1944 to move into Starr's family beach house in Santa Cruz, California. But Werner was still labeled an "internee at large" and had to suffer indignities like restricted travel, censored mail and constant battles with the government to avoid forced repatriation to Germany. In 1948, at long last, his arrest was rescinded, and he became a legal resident. In 1952, Werner became a U.S. citizen and went on to establish a new import-export business in California. Years later, Heidi's father never wanted to talk about that dark period in his family's life.

In 2002, Heidi and Ingrid attended a reunion at the Crystal City internment camp, where they met a few people who remembered their family. Heidi Gurcke concludes her chronicle with a sobering warning: "Yesterday, my family was imprisoned. Unless we acknowledge our mistakes and somehow learn from our past, tomorrow it may be yours. Take heed."

**END**

### **Paperless Society, Tina Sansone, BellaOnline Genealogy Editor**

Recently something happened to make me concerned about our society becoming a paperless society. Letters, documents, all types of paper sources are an important factor in genealogy documentation. There are many types of sources, primary and secondary, that we rely upon to prove our ancestor's birth, marriage and death; an event that occurred during their life. While most of us use the standard sources such as birth, marriage and death certificates and census, how delighted we are if you come across a letter, note, some small memo that our ancestor actually wrote with their own hands!

Some of us are lucky to have these letters or even a journal, that documents the lives and trials your ancestors experienced. These letters pour out the emotions experienced, the trials, the joys and the events celebrated such as marriages and births. These letters may still be in the envelope showing the location of the writer and the recipient. Letters were often dated which would put it in its proper historical time frame.

Treasure these items as they may be somewhat a thing of the past for our descendants. In a recent online tag, this poster said, "Email has replaced letter-writing for me. It's sad that future genealogists won't have paper memories to read about life in the 20th and 21st centuries." This really made me ponder on when I had actually written a letter to mail versus email. Several years ago I wrote at least one or two letters a week to family or friends. But, now I can not recall when I wrote my last letter via the post office, which is really sad as the previous poster said. Emails are often deleted after time and those stories or comments are gone forever. Rarely does one take the time to print them to save.

Receiving a letter written by someone directly to you is special and exciting. It shows they cared enough to write the letter, give it thought and mail it to you. Stories that were once written in a journal are now substituted for blogs. We should take the time to print some of our special writings out and save them for our descendants to have years from now to read.

Here are some ideas I came up with to help us save some of our writings for our descendancy.

- \*Write a letter to family and/or friends once a week or month.
- \*Print out some of your special blogs or online journalings.
- \*If you fill out an application online, print it out for a hard copy.
- \*Although you can see some vital record information online, still order birth, marriage and death certificates on family members.
- \*Scan documents and keep copies of important papers.

While the computer age has not completely made us a "paperless society", its impact will be felt by our descendants if we do not write, print and scan today those records we wish to leave for our posterity.

**Submitted by Carolyn Heinsohn**

**END**

# OPERATIONS

## MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 9, 2008 MEETING GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The November 9, 2008 meeting of the German-Texan Heritage Society Board of Directors was called to order at 10:05 a.m. in the German Free School at Austin with GTHS President Wing Evans presiding. Board members present were Ewing Evans, Mary El-Beheri, Hubert Heinen, Connie Krause, Gerri West, Mary Whigham, Martha Liehse, Carl Luckenbach, John Siemssen, Glen Treibs and Jean Heide. Board members absent were Randy Rupley, Daniel Bode, and Warren Friedrich. Also present was Eva Barnett, GTHS Executive Director and incoming board members Hans Micklitz and Charles Frederick.

### MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 9, 2008 MEETING

H. Heinen moved acceptance of the minutes of the board meeting August 9, 2008 as scribed by the Secretary, Mary Whigham. **MOTION APPROVED**

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer G. West presented the Morgan Stanley Account values as of October end, and expense and revenue numbers thru September (3<sup>rd</sup> quarter). President Wing Evans called for acceptance of her report, it was seconded and the **MOTION WAS APPROVED**.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director's printed report dated November 9, 2008 was distributed to board members prior to the meeting. Eva reported membership at 809 for a total of 1122 members, 308 Guild members for a total of 427 and 17 life members. The Operational Fund to date totaled \$13,155. Donations to the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Club to date totaled \$81,288 or 54% of the goal set. A successful Oktoberfest was held at the German Free School and the Annual Meeting with 134 people registered netted \$4,934. German classes in Austin and Brenham are ongoing with potential classes set for San Antonio, Temple and Fredericksburg. Eva asked for pictures to put in the newly developing web site. The potential for a beer garden to be developed on site was discussed with further information needed.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Executive Committee met on October 7, 2008 and crafted a calendar for reporting from the various committees, more detailed committee responsibilities and a revised board meeting schedule determined by a straw vote of 6 times a year. It is expected that this will increase committee productivity.

### ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

C. Krause will continue work on new board members' manual that will include a toolkit to help board members be the feet on the ground in their various areas to increase our presence in the various communities.

### BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

G. West presented the committee report. The balance sheet was impacted by the downturn and a deficit budget was proposed. Following discussion on various cost cutting measures and fund raising ideas, Glen Treibs made the motion that the executive board be given the authority to approve a revised balanced budget. The motion was seconded and carried. All board members will receive a copy of the revised budget.

### DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

In the absence of a chair, Eva Barnett reported on the various fund raising strategies already employed by the organization. After discussion, Gerri West volunteered to be the interim chair until a permanent chairperson could be named. The committee consists of Van Massirer, Connie Krause, John Siemssen and Rodney Koenig. It was suggested that information on original free school attendees acquired during the preparations for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary be used in various articles for the Journal to increase interest in the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Club. →



### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Mary Whigham reported that she and Eva were working on the renewal letter and that the committee would embrace the new responsibilities outlined in the executive committee report which included responsibilities for a membership drive each year.

### GERMAN FREE SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORT

Wing Evans reported that all renovations previously approved by the board were complete and within budget. There were no further renovations being contemplated. Gerri West reported that the new guild president is Charles Locklin and that Christmas Market events on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December will be held in Austin, San Antonio and Brenham and we will participate in Tomball's first Christmas Market on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

Board member John Siemssen presented an outline for a strategic planning process based on the executive committee meeting work done in October. Committee chairs have the responsibility to report at the January meeting their goals and activities for 2009. It was suggested that each committee be limited to three board members and that additional committee needs be met by volunteers from the membership. Committee chairs were appointed: Executive committee, Wing Evans; Financial Committee, Gerri West; Membership Committee, Mary Whigham with Randy Rupley chair of subcommittee, Marketing; Activities Committee, Carl Luckenbach; Development Committee, no chair;

### AD HOC OFFICER NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair Connie Krause reported that current officers, Wing Evans, President, Connie Krause, Vice President, Gerri West, Treasurer and Mary Whigham, Secretary will continue in office for one more year. After asking for nominations from the floor, President Evans called for acceptance of her report. **MOTION CARRIED.**

### OLD BUSINESS

Mary El-Beheri presented information on proposed annual meeting location, Round Rock, potential events, and proposed date. A motion to set the meeting on September 11-13 was made by Hubert Heinen and seconded. **MOTION CARRIED.** Treasurer Gerri West asked for a more complete budget by the January meeting.

The Executive Committee was asked to evaluate the Advisory Board Guidelines that were established by that committee at the annual meeting and report at the January meeting on its completeness. John Siemssen will tweak and forward to the Executive Committee...

### NEW BUSINESS

A motion was made by Hubert Heinen that Glen Treibs and Jean Heide approach the appropriate organization/s to request that markers on King William Street in San Antonio reflect its original name, Kaiser Wilhelm Strasse. The motion was seconded. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Gerri West moved that Annette Stachowitz's name as a signer on the Washington Mutual checking account be removed. The motion was seconded. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The potential to participate in a German-American Internment Exhibit that was coming to Texas was discussed. Board members will visit the web site to view panels and decide at the January board meeting. Mary Whigham and Charles Frederick will work on a grant to cover costs.

The date for the next board meeting was set for January 10, 2009.

### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Submitted by Mary Whigham, Secretary

**END**



*Founded 1978*

## GTHS and German Free School Guild Calendar of Events - 2009

### March

- 8<sup>th</sup> - GTHS Board Meeting (GFS)
- 8<sup>th</sup> - Potluck Dinner (GFS)
- 10<sup>th</sup> - Guild Board Meeting (GFS)
- 14<sup>th</sup> - German Genealogy Seminar (Waco)
- 15<sup>th</sup> - Speaker Series (GFS)
- 27<sup>th</sup> - German Movie Night (GFS)

### April

- 14<sup>th</sup> - Guild Board Meeting (GFS)
- 15<sup>th</sup> - Schulhaus Reporter deadline
- 17<sup>th</sup> - German Movie Night (GFS)
- 19<sup>th</sup> - Speaker Series (GFS)
- 25<sup>th</sup> - Maifest (GFS)

### May

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Journal Deadline
- 12<sup>th</sup> - Guild Board Meeting (GFS)
- 16<sup>th</sup> - GTHS Board Meeting (GFS)
- 17<sup>th</sup> - Speaker Series (GFS)
- 22<sup>th</sup> - German Movie Night (GFS)

### June

- 6<sup>th</sup> - Summer Samstagsschule I (GFS)
- 9<sup>th</sup> - Guild Board Meeting (GFS)
- 15<sup>th</sup> - Schulhaus Reporter Deadline

### July

- 11<sup>th</sup> - Summer Samstagsschule II (GFS)
- 12<sup>th</sup> - GTHS Board Meeting (tentative)
- 12<sup>th</sup> - Volunteer Appreciation Party (GFS)
- 14<sup>th</sup> - Guild Board Meeting (GFS)

### August

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Journal Deadline
- 11<sup>th</sup> - Guild Board Meeting (GFS)
- 15<sup>th</sup> - Schulhaus Reporter Deadline

### September

- 8<sup>th</sup> - Guild Board Meeting (GFS)
- 13<sup>th</sup> - GTHS Board Meeting (tentative)
- 13<sup>th</sup> - Potluck (GFS)
- 19<sup>th</sup> - Oktoberfest (GFS - tentative)
- 20<sup>th</sup> - Speaker Series (GFS)
- 25<sup>th</sup> - German Movie Night (GFS)
- TBA - German Language Classes (Austin, Brenham, San Antonio, Fredericksburg)

### October

- 9-10<sup>th</sup> - GTHS Annual Meeting (Round Rock, TX)
- 13<sup>th</sup> - Guild Board Meeting (GFS)
- 15<sup>th</sup> - Schulhaus Reporter Deadline
- 18<sup>th</sup> - Speaker Series (GFS)

### November

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Journal Deadline
- 8<sup>th</sup> - GTHS Board Meeting (tentative)
- 8<sup>th</sup> - Potluck (GFS)
- 10<sup>th</sup> - Guild Board Meeting (GFS)
- 15<sup>th</sup> - Speaker Series (GFS)

### December

- 5<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Market (GFS)
- 8<sup>th</sup> - Guild Board Meeting (GFS)
- 15<sup>th</sup> - Schulhaus Reporter Deadline

(GFS) denotes activities held at the German Free School in Austin. Other events have their location listed. Please visit our website, [www.germantexans.org](http://www.germantexans.org), for the most up-to-date information



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### NEWS

#### **GTHS Scholarship Ceremony**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual GTHS Scholarships are scheduled to be awarded on February 28<sup>th</sup> at the Texas State German Contest awards ceremony held at the University of Texas in Austin. Since this issue of the *Journal* goes to press before the ceremony, we'll report the names of the winners in the Summer issue. Congratulations in advance to the talented winners! We hope to invite them to our Annual Meeting again this year.

#### **German-Texan Materials Needed For Educational Website**

Over the past seven years, the Texas German Dialect Project (TGDP) has interviewed more than 300 Texas German speakers and archived the recordings in the Texas German Dialect Archive online. They are now also developing a series of educational materials for classroom use, including a Texas German history website. Users will be able to look at a time-line of events relevant to T-G history and click on a year to read more information about a particular event, such as the founding of Boerne or the Austin Saengerrunde. For each historical event there will be primary source materials (and their English translations) in digital format, such as images, newspaper reports, diary entries, letters, minutes of meetings, etc. You can participate by submitting any old pictures (of people, buildings, organizations, etc.), newspapers, letters, diaries, etc. relevant to Texas German history, to the TGDP. Contact them at (512) 279-2462 or [texasgermandialect@gmail.com](mailto:texasgermandialect@gmail.com). GTHS is in full support of this exciting project!

#### **Seeking German Texan Family Histories**

Have you researched your German-Texan family history? Do you have it in an organized format – either a personally typed collection of pages or even a bound published copy? If so, please send a copy to the GTHS office. We are working on developing and expanding our collection of German-Texan surnames and family histories in the GTHS Library as a major resource for Genealogical research. We are looking forward to receiving your Texas family histories.

#### **WWII Oral History Project**

The National WWII Museum in New Orleans is seeking to conduct interviews with WWII veterans - both Allied and Axis. In particular, they are looking for German, Austrian, or Italian veterans. Every person who served in the war has an important story to tell, so they would like to hear from every branch of the service, every rank, every title, and every person who experienced World War II. These interviews are completely non-political and are simply about the men's' individual experiences during the war. For more information, please contact Robert Meschede at [robertmeschede@yahoo.com](mailto:robertmeschede@yahoo.com) or call 281-841-2231. [www.ddaymuseum.org](http://www.ddaymuseum.org)

#### **Publication Deadlines**

February 14 is the deadline for the March/April issue of the Schulhaus Reporter. Send your articles to [newsletter@germantexans.org](mailto:newsletter@germantexans.org). May 1 is the deadline for submitting articles and event notices for the Summer 2009 issue of the Journal. Send Journal submissions to editor Mary Whigham at [mjwhig@texasbb.com](mailto:mjwhig@texasbb.com).

## **GTHS & GUILD EVENTS**

### **GERMAN GENEALOGY SEMINAR IN WACO**

On Saturday, March 14, GTHS is hosting an all day seminar on German genealogy in Waco. Topics include "All I Know is Great Grandpa Came From Germany" by genealogist Liz Hicks, "Growing the Tree: Oral History Methods for Genealogists" by Joshua Haaland of Baylor University, "Genealogical Resources in the Texas Collection at Baylor University" by Michael Toon, "Birth to Death: Records in the County Clerk's Office" by Andy Harwell, McLennan County Clerk, and "Library Resources for Genealogical Research" by Bill Buckner, of the Waco-McLennan County Library. Registration begins at 8:30 am, and the program runs until 3:30pm. Pre-registration costs \$35 for GTHS members and \$40 for non-members; add \$5 if paying at the door. Lunch is included. A registration form can be found at the front of this issue, or just call 866-482-4847 to register with a credit card. Contact Van or Mary Massirer at (254) 486-2366 or vmassirer@yahoo.com with questions.

### **MAIFEST – SATURDAY, APRIL 25**

Mark your calendars for this year's Maifest, held on Saturday, April 25, from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. We'll have a fun day of celebrating our German culture in the gardens of the German Free School. Enjoy great food, cold beer, live music, folk dancing, wrapping of the Maypole, a fantastic silent auction, and a German book sale. Please join us and bring your friends and family.

### **GTHS ANNUAL MEETING – SAVE THE DATE!**

The 2009 GTHS Annual Meeting is scheduled for the weekend of October 9-10, 2009 in Round Rock. We're planning a great selection of speakers and entertainment for you! The details will be finalized over the next several weeks. The program of speakers, a registration form, and other relevant information will be printed in your Summer *Journal*. Until then, please check our website – [www.germantexans.org](http://www.germantexans.org) – for updates.

### **ONGOING GERMAN FREE SCHOOL EVENTS (in Austin)**

**Open House** – The German Free School is open for guided tours every Thursday from noon to 4:00 pm. (except holidays)

**Stammtisch** – Come practice your German language skills every Thursday from noon to 1:00 pm.

**Potluck** – Make new friends in the German-Texan community at 4:00 pm on the second Sunday of every other month. Bring a dish to share and the beverage of your choice. The next potluck will be held Sunday, March 8. There will be no potluck in May, due to Mother's Day.

**Speaker Series** – Enjoy a speaker or musical performance at 3:00 pm on the third Sunday of the month. The series ranges from book signings, to wine tastings, to craft demonstrations, to classical music performances. Free admission.

**March 15** – Celia Hayes, author, will talk about her research and book series on the Adelsverein.

**April 19** – Former *Journal* book reviewer Ron Hunka will show pictures of Austria and talk about his travels there.

**May 17** – Author Gary Hartman will talk about his book, *The History of Texas Music*, and the specific influence of Texas German culture on the music of the Lone Star state.



**German Film Night** – Come watch a German film (with English subtitles) on the fourth Friday of the month at 7:00 pm. Enjoy popcorn and pretzels and pre-film gemütlichkeit. Free admission.

**March 27** – 'Comedian Harmonists'; R - 1997. In 1928 in Berlin, several young musicians create a German a-cappella band, and over time the group becomes a great success. However, problems appear with the beginning of the Nazi period, because three of the group's members are Jews and so soon are forbidden to perform in public. The movie portrays the rising of young stars, the shadows of their success, and finally their fall, being destroyed by politics and a mad government.

**April 17** – 'Die Fälscher' (The Counterfeiters); R, 2007. This is the true story of the largest counterfeiting operation in history, set up by the Nazis in 1936. After Jewish counterfeiter Salomon Sorowitsch is thrown into a concentration camp, he is forced to produce fake foreign currency for the Nazis. He and his team have conflicting ideas about how to proceed, and are faced with the fact that their choices have serious consequences. Won an Oscar for Best Foreign Film.

**May 22** – 'Jenseits der Stille' (Beyond Silence); PG-13, 1996. This is a compelling story about a girl who serves as a translator for her deaf-mute parents. As Lara grows up, she becomes develops a significant talent for music, yet her parents cannot share in her musical career. Soon she must decide between her parents and her own ambitions. Nominated for an Oscar (Best Foreign Film). Won several other awards worldwide.

## OTHER EVENTS

### 2009 TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY STATE CONVENTION – March 7

The Colorado County Chapter will host the 26th Annual Texas German Society State Convention on March 7 at the Columbus K.C. Hall, 3845 I-10 West, Columbus, Texas 78934. Visit their website at [www.texasgermansociety.com/convention.htm](http://www.texasgermansociety.com/convention.htm) for detailed convention program and registration information for visitors and exhibitors.

### CELEBRATE ME!! – A VISIT TO GERMANY – March 14

The George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center, in collaboration with the German-Texan Heritage Society, invite you to discover Germany. Celebrate Me!! is a virtual travel exploration designed for young people. Every other month, we "visit" a new continent, learning about culture, language, food, geography and history. This trip takes us to beautiful Germany. For more information please visit [www.ci.austin.tx.us/carver](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/carver) or call (512) 974-6700.

### TOMBALL GERMAN HERITAGE FESTIVAL – March 27-29

The 9th Annual Tomball German Heritage Festival will be held March 27-29 in downtown Tomball. This Music/Street festival celebrating German and ethnic heritage features 5 stages of live music entertainment, ethnic and festival food, beer, wine, 150 street vendors, all kinds of German souvenirs and clothing, arts crafts, antiques, Heritage Center, German church service, fireworks, carnival, pony ride, petting zoo, strolling music makers, street performers, and much more. Like Oktoberfest in March! Huge fun for the whole family! No admission or parking fees. For more information, contact Grady Martin at 281-379-6844 or [gradsand@yahoo.com](mailto:gradsand@yahoo.com).

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# GERMAN-TEXAN INTERESTS

- Genealogy
- History
- Culture
- Speaker Series
- German Interest Tours
- Language Classes
- Education & Research
- Volunteer Projects
- Maifest
- Christmas Market
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## German Language Ability:

- Beg       Int
- Adv       Fluent

*Thank you for joining GTHS  
and the  
German Free School Guild*

## HERZLICH WILLKOMMEN

### OFFICE HOURS

Mon, Wed, Fri - 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

### TOUR & LIBRARY HOURS

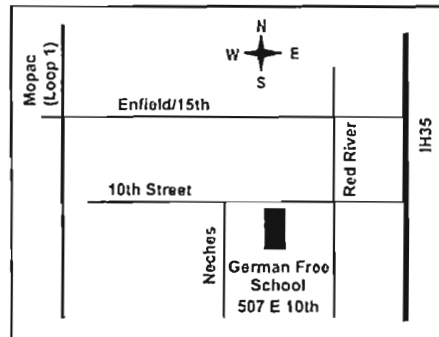
Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri - 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

OR BY APPOINTMENT.

STAMMTISCH: Thu - 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Please call for group tour and  
handicapped access info.

Metered parking on E. 10th Street.



## GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

### PHYSICAL ADDRESS

507 E. 10TH STREET  
AUSTIN, TX 78701

### MAILING ADDRESS

PO Box 684171  
AUSTIN, 78768-4171

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[www.GermanTexans.org](http://www.GermanTexans.org)

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# MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

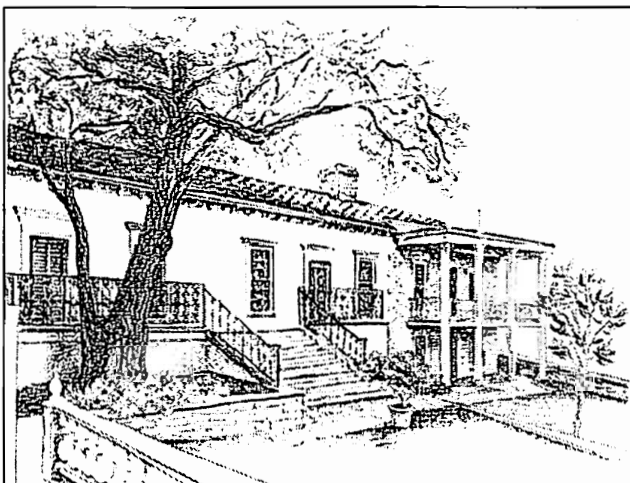
# TEXAN SPOKEN HERE

**Promoting awareness and preservation of the German cultural heritage of Texas.**

The German-Texan Heritage Society is renowned for the books it publishes, the cultural events it sponsors, and its unique collection of immigrant and historical books, including the complete collection of *Texas Vorwaerts*, an all-German Texas newspaper. Founded in 1978, GTHS is a non-profit organization dependent upon the generosity of friends and members who support its mission.

## EDUCATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

In 1858, the German Free School Association opened Austin's first chartered school in the building pictured below. Since 1991, the German Free School has served as our headquarters. Learn to read and write German here, research German-Texan history in our Pioneer Library, and come participate in our numerous cultural events.



## GTHS ANNUAL MEETING

Each year members and friends of GTHS gather to listen to speakers, participate in workshops, visit German heritage sites and build new connections. See the Summer *Journal* or the GTHS website ([www.GermanTexans.org](http://www.GermanTexans.org)) for more information

# MEMBER BENEFITS

Membership is based on a calendar year and open to anyone interested in the German heritage of Texas. You do not need to speak German to be a member of GTHS.

- Free Advice on Genealogy Research
- Discounts on Classes and Events
- Informative Member Publications
- Monthly Email Newsletter

## THE JOURNAL

Your annual GTHS membership brings you an issue of the Society's *Journal* every three months. Each issue contains over 100 pages of family history, genealogy, inquiries from GTHS members seeking information about their German heritage, articles about GTHS members and their families, and statewide news of German-Texan events.

In each *Journal* you will find book reviews and articles about our German-Texan culture and history written by GTHS members or taken from other publications and newspapers.

## THE GUILD

The German influence in Texas is a living legacy. Through Guild membership in the GTHS, our members are promoting and preserving their cultural heritage for the generations to come. Guild members host and organize the many programs offered at the German Free School, including German language classes, a monthly speaker series and annual traditional German events.

As a GTHS Guild member, you will receive six issues of our bimonthly Guild newsletter, the *Schulhaus Reporter*, which includes a calendar of events.

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS	GTHS & Guild	GTHS Only
Life Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$750	—
Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 75	—
Family (2+ at same address)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 40	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25
Student (w/ valid ID)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 30	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 15
Institution/Library	—	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35

**Operational Fund Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_**  
 GTHS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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**GTHS, P.O. Box 684171  
 Austin, TX 78768-4171**



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**GENEALOGY EDITOR**

**LIZ HICKS, Houston**

Send inquiries or responses for family history information to Liz Hicks at 746 Edgebrook Drive, Houston, TX 77034-2030 or email to [erootrot@usa.net](mailto:erootrot@usa.net)

**JOURNAL EDITOR**

**MARY WHIGHAM, Brenham**

**WHERE DO YOU SEND THINGS FOR THE JOURNAL?**

Send materials for the *Journal* (announcements, articles, news of reunions, clippings, and other information) to:  
GTHS *Journal*, c/o Mary Whigham, 16100 McCraven School Rd, Washington, TX 77880-5008  
or email to: [mjwhig@texsbb.com](mailto:mjwhig@texsbb.com).

**WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING MATERIALS TO THE JOURNAL?**

NEXT ISSUE

SUMMER (JUNE 2009)  
FALL (SEPTEMBER 2009)  
WINTER (DECEMBER 2009)

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

May 1, 2009  
August 1, 2009  
November 1, 2009

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Materials sent for *The Journal* will not be returned. All materials must include the contributor's name, a source and a date. All submitted manuscript articles must be typed single-spaced on 8 ½ x 11" white paper with right, left, top, and bottom margins no less than .7 inches. Electronic versions are preferred. Newspaper clippings should NOT be cropped closely. This can be done more accurately with our computer. All German materials must be accompanied by an English text. All submissions will be reviewed by the *Journal* editor and the Publications Committee. They have the right and responsibility to refuse materials that may not be in accordance with GTHS policies. The German-Texan Heritage Society, its volunteer *Journal* editors and its paid office staff are not responsible for errors or misinformation in submitted articles. All editors are volunteers, and are not paid for their services.

**GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY**  
**Post Office Box 684171**  
**Austin, TX 78768-4171**  
**[www.GermanTexans.org](http://www.GermanTexans.org)**

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***Promoting awareness and preservation of the  
German cultural heritage of Texas***