



NEWSLETTER

Indiana German Heritage Society INC

Volume 1, Issue 3

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WANDER INDIANA'S GERMAN FESTIVALS

Every year the Wander Indiana Festival Map advertises many German festivals throughout the state. These festivals can be found wherever the descendants of German immigrants settled. Some of these festivals have long traditions, others are new, reflecting the renewed interest in local German heritage.

The Freudenfest in historic Oldenburg, in Franklin County, began as the village's Bicentennial project. It is natural that this German-American village should celebrate the nation's anniversary with a German festival. Other festivals such as the annual Bierstubes of many churches have been for years raising funds for parishes to build churches and schools.

The names of these many festivals vary, of course Octoberfests abound. The two largest are those organized by the Oberlander Club of Terre Haute and the Federation of German Societies in Indianapolis' German Park. These Octoberfests continue the Bavarian tradition with Biergartens, singing and dancing. Lowell, Bremen, Crown Point, Batesville, Michigan City, Hoagland, and the Athenaeum Turners in Indianapolis also host Octoberfests. A variation on the Octoberfest is Bloomington's "Octubafest" organized by Professor Harvey Phillips, I. U.'s tuba enthusiast. Strassenfests are held in Lawrenceburg, Jasper and Terre Haute. Evansville with its strong German heritage has more than one festival. Others include the Flussfest and the Germania Maennerchor's Volksfest. Both Fort Wayne and Vincennes have Germanfests. With its many German villages, Dubois County has many parish Bierstubes, such as the Heinrichsdorf Fest in St. Henry, and Das Huntingburger Herbstfest. The Swiss communities of Tell City and Berne also celebrate their German-Swiss heritage with festivals.

These many festivals have a variety of sponsors. Many towns have German sports clubs, cultural societies, and music societies which have established the events to raise funds and to share their German traditions with the community. Many festivals have been started by non-German institutions which want to remember the German traditions and contributions in the community. The Kunstfest was started in New Harmony to showcase art and to celebrate the town's history as a German colony of the nineteenth century.

Other festivals are centered around German and Indiana-German institutions—such as the Bratwurst Festival in Westville, the Banholzer Wineceller's Festival in Hesston, the Huber Wine Festival in Borden and the Kamm Brewery's Arts & Crafts Festival in Mishawaka.

Indiana's German festival offer a variety of things, of course there is food and music, but most provide a Biergarten or Bierstube and dancing. Depending on the festival, the festival-goer can find foot races, hikes (Volksmarsch), competitive events, folk dance demonstrations, and arts and crafts booths.

Indiana's German festival continue to multiply reflecting the growing interest in Indiana's German heritage. Most festivals are scheduled during the summer but need not be limited to this busy season. Ideals for planning a local German festival can come from examining the German heritage and history of the area. For instance, the Germans of Oldenburg and Indianapolis never miss the opportunity celebrate prior to Lent with Fasching, Karneval, or Fastnacht. Since Ash Wednesday usually falls in February or early March, Fastnacht is an opportunity to have a party and socialize during those bleak months when winter is almost over. New Orleans may have the biggest and most famous pre-

Lenten party in America, but wherever Germans settled, they brought their traditions with them too. Schuetzenfests were popular with our German ancestors both in German and in Indiana. The German farmers and hunters prided themselves with their marksmanship and this competition allowed them to prove it.

The Christmas season provides the opportunity for the revival of St. Nicholas festivals (December 6). The revival of Christkindlmarkts or Christmas Fairs could provide an opportunity for home-made arts and crafts to be marketed at specialty booths in a holiday atmosphere. New Year's Eve or Sylvesterabend was traditionally celebrated in many rural German areas of the state with fireworks, New Year wishes and shotgun volleys.

According to the Athenaeum Turners, the St. Benno Fest began in Bavaria hundreds of years ago when an obscure monk concocted a new marvelous beer. When the people of the town tasted it, they exclaimed what a good beer it was. It was named the Lion's Brew. This festival marks the creation of this wonderful beer.

The recognition by President Reagan and Congress of October 6 as German-American Day in 1983, provides the opportunity for local parades, memorials, and more festivals. The German theme festival provides an excellent opportunity for us to celebrate our heritage and also to explore it. Festival planners could use it to educate festival visitors about the German heritage of the community, the state, and nation. The contributions of the German immigrants goes far beyond Biergartens and street festivals, they are only the tip of the iceberg.

>William L. Selm<



EXCHANGES:

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE / CITIES TO CITIES

Interest in the German immigration to Indiana and our cultural German heritage continues to grow on both sides of the Atlantic. This interest is experienced in various ways from the establishment of Sister City relationships to hosting "home-stays" for visiting German, Austrian, and Swiss nationals.

The Sister City programs are designed to extend and improve international relations among cities through commercial, cultural and educational exchanges—especially of young people. Home-stays offer opportunities to welcome visiting foreigners

into our homes for a bit of Hoosier hospitality. It is a time for guests to experience first hand our ways and customs as we Americans go about our daily routines.

An affiliation between Evansville, Indiana and Osnabrück, Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony) began with the realization that many citizens of Evansville have very similar names as people in Osnabrück. Apparently a very large contingency of immigrants to eastern and southern Indiana has come from the Osnabrück area. Huntingburg's affiliation with Schleddehausen is based upon this same immigration. North of Osnabrück is the town of Damm from where many settlers to Oldenburg, Indiana came. In the February issue of the Newsletter much attention was given to the zur Oeveste letters sent between Columbus, Indiana and Rieste, Hannover. These letters have sparked much interest at the University of Osnabrück.

Pfaffenweiler, Baden-Württemberg and Jasper, Indiana will formalize their newly established Sister City affiliation on May 23rd. Goshen, Indiana will be hosting their Sister City, Bexbach, Saarland on their seven-city tour of the U.S. this summer. Other Hoosier cities with German affiliations are: Mishawaka with Soest, North Rhine-Westphalia; and New Harmony with Wiernsheim, Baden-Württemberg. In 1986 New Harmony will participate in Wiernsheim's 800 year celebration with exchanges and contributions from the George Rapp story to Wiernsheim's Stadt-Museum.

Thirteen students from Concordia High School in Fort Wayne will complete the second half of an academic exchange with Lldenscheid, North Rhine-Westphalia this spring. The Indianapolis Soccer Club will host homestays for the Fortuna Wien Soccer team from Vienna, Austria. Indianapolis area members of the IGHS will host both the Pfaffenweiler and Bexbach groups as they tour the Hoosier capital on their brief visits in Indiana.

>J.G.H.<



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A TALE OF TWO TOWNS:
DISCOVERING ROOTS AND GRAFTED FRUIT

A delegation from Pfaffenweiler, Baden-Württemberg headed by their mayor Fritz Gutgsell, will arrive in Jasper on May 22nd. This will initiate a week long celebration of historical ties. Jasper and Pfaffenweiler have much in common. This can readily be seen by many of the same family surnames. Among the settlers of Jasper were immigrants from Pfaffenweiler, Bollschweil and Kirchhofen—all near Freiburg. Because of its historical ties Jasper became interested in an affiliation with a town in that area. On May 23rd both towns will formalize their friendship by signing a Sister City charter. A Maibaum (May Pole) will be erected; and on May 25th, a Western Dance is planned to initiate the guests to American customs.

Pfaffenweiler is located on the outskirts of Freiburg in a vacation area between the Rhine River and the Black Forest. It is a wine growing town nestled into the vineyards of the Batzenberg.

Last September 17th forty travelers from Jasper arrived in Pfaffenweiler by touring coach for a German homestay and celebration. The people of Pfaffenweiler extended to their guests friendship and hospitality and, joined by the neighboring villages of Bollschweil and Kirchhofen, had prepared a program for the visit which included a banquet, music, entertainment and a crowd of 400 to greet the travelers.

It was the villages dependence on wine and the vineyards which had led to the emigration to America in the 19th century. Famine had followed the bad harvest of 1816/17 in Germany. The Batzenberg area was hit again and again with other disasters. Chronicler Father Kleiser reported in 1825:

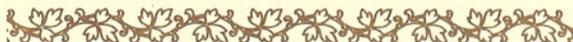
"This year, hail as large as chicken eggs destroyed much of the harvest. Birds were killed in flight and rabbits on the ground. The storm extended from Ballrechten to Gundelfingen."

This forced many of the area's service people, those who did not hold land, to leave the area and search for a new life somewhere else.

Mary Jo Meuser, German teacher at the Jasper High School is working on a school partnership with the Max-Planck Realschule of Bad Krozingen, where the Pfaffenweiler children attend high school. Jasper students are looking forward to their first exchanges.

After the Pfaffenweiler group visits Jasper they will go on to the Indiana University campus at Bloomington and be in Indianapolis for a State House visit on May 28th. A pitch-in reception is planned for them at German Park. This cover-dish dinner is open to everyone and begins at 6:30 pm. Anyone interested in participating in this reception should contact Ruth Scanland at (317) 359-1378.

>Ruth Reichmann<



German Genealogy

The February 1985 issue of Genealogy—a publication of the Family History Section, Indiana Historical Society—deals at some length with Mennonite and Amish Family History. The article includes a listing of some publications in print that is very helpful to persons attempting to trace their Mennonite or Amish family history.

Letters From Our Palatines Ancestors, 1644-1689 includes among its materials 36 letters dating from 1644-1672, a section devoted to the "Concord" and several maps. The book costs \$22.00. Write to G. T. Hawbaker, P. O. Box 207, Hershey, Pennsylvania 17033.

The Genealogy Committee encourages queries of 35 words or less, or other useful information for this column, to be sent c/o the Newsletter. Items must have an Indiana-German connection. Items will be published as space permits.



W A N T E D

HOOSIER GERMAN TALES--SMALL & TALL

A great number of German fairy tales would not have survived the passage of time, had the Grimm Brothers not collected and recorded what in their days had simply been an oral and often only regional tradition. Like the Grimms, we are also faced with the perils of that passing time. Every year takes its toll from the unrecorded treasures of the tales about our Hoosier German forefathers. This is an urgent appeal to all interested in preserving our Hoosier German lore. Write down these little stories from within your family—ask the old folks you know—record where appropriate—in English or German—about any aspect and period of Hoosier German life—funny or sad, interesting or cute. Contact: Eb Reichmann, Editorial Board.



VILLAGE OF SPIRES

A guided tour of Oldenburg in Franklin County is offered by the Athenæum Turners and the IGHS on Saturday July 20th. The occasion is the annual Freudenfest in this historic German Catholic community, known as the "Village of Spires." Freudenfest (pronounced Froy-din-fest) translates as the Festival of Joy and began as the towns' celebration of the Bicentennial in 1976.

Oldenburg is a community noted for its extraordinary collection of nineteenth century and early twentieth century German-American architecture. The entire village was honored by the National Park Service and the State Department of Natural Resources in 1983 by placement on the National Register of Historic Places.

The town was platted in 1837 by two German speculators who named the new town in honor of their home, the province of Oldenburg in Northern Germany. German Catholics coming from Cincinnati erected the first church, a log building, in 1837. Father Franz Joseph Rudolf was appointed Pastor of Oldenburg in 1844. He in turn, invited Mother Teresa Hackelmeier to establish the Convent in 1851. From this background evolved the Catholic triad of Holy Family Church, the Franciscan Monastery, and Immaculate Conception Convent and Academy. Unfortunately, the Monastery was recently closed and the fate of the buildings is of great concern to local citizens, the IGHS and preservationists all over Indiana.

The most distinctive architectural aspect of Oldenburg is its many spires. Another significant aspect is the fact that 80 of the roughly 115 homes in the historic district were constructed prior to 1900. The oldest structures are constructed of stone or wood or a combination thereof. Brick structures were not built until after 1858 with bricks from the Gehring Brickyard at the south edge of town. The use of cast and wrought iron as well as the exceptional work of master tinsmith

Casper Gaupel provide the community with great visual richness. Many of the buildings in the community follow the tradition of combining shop and residence under one roof. Many are built up to the sidewalk allowing for a backyard, grape arbor, barn, smoke house and garden.

The main building of the Immaculate Conception Convent and Academy was designed by the firm of D. A. Bohlen & Son of Indianapolis. The Bohlen firm also designed the Convent Chapel which was built in 1889-90 with art work from the Mayer Studio in Munich.

The impressive 1862 Holy Family Church also has German stained glass windows added after WW I. Father Rudolf is buried in the crypt under the east side altar. The Monastery directly behind the church was built in 1894 by local contractor George Holtel & Co. It contained the Franciscan Friars' living quarters, lecture hall, parlors, workshops, dining hall and kitchen. This empty structure is in excellent condition and could be adopted for a number of new uses, if only the owner—the Archbishop of Indianapolis—would allow the building to be marketed.

The monastery served as a seminary for the Franciscan Fathers who arrived in Oldenburg in 1866. The Franciscan Fathers came from the Austrian Tyrol by way of Cincinnati. Convent founder, Fr. Rudolf, came from the Alsace and co-founder Mother Teresa came from Vienna.

The Indiana German Heritage Society is dedicated to the study and preservation of Indiana's rich German heritage. It is currently engaged together with Professor Antonius Holtmann of the Univ. of Oldenburg in a joint study involving Oldenburg and its roots in Germany. Professor Holtmann will be coming to Indiana for this project which will be funded by a German research foundation. Germans are very interested and want to learn more about this remarkable German colonial village and the German emigrants who built it.

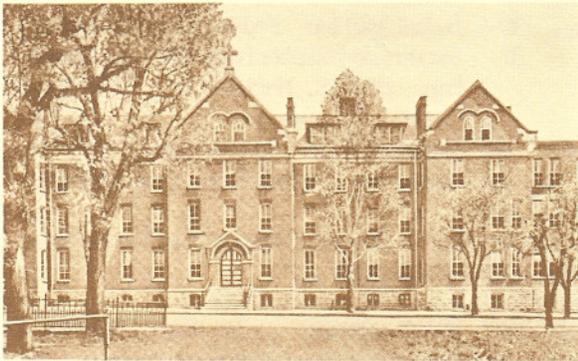
This Society with the Oldenburg Preservation Association and the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana are working together towards allowing the monastery to remain in its important location but function in a new capacity. A dialogue is needed so that these concerned groups could work together with the Archbishop and the local parish council towards an alternative to senseless demolition. Oldenburg and its fine buildings are precious as a collection of German-American material culture that is needed to understand the German contribution to Indiana.

cont. next page:

IGHS urges its members and other sympathetic parties to write to Archbishop Edward O'Meara at: 1400 N. Meridan St., Indianapolis, Ind. 46206.

For information about the July 20th Freudenfest tour of Oldenburg which will also include a stop at the canal town of Metamore, contact Bob Swan at (317) 635-6336. Otherwise, we shall meet you at the Freudenfest in the afternoon for a tour of the town and a visit at the festival.

>William L. Selm<



[Franciscan Monastery, Oldenburg, Indiana]



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* = Non-elected Board Appointments.

The above Directors and Committee Chairs may be reached by writing to: Das Deutsche Haus 401 East Michigan Street Indianapolis, Indiana 46204.

Calendar Of Events

- May 18, Indianapolis: Maennerchor Centennial May Dance & Concert. Murat Temple 8:00 pm \$4.00.
- May 23, Jasper: Official Sister City signing ceremonies between Pfaffenweiler and Jasper. Dinner & reception at K. of C. [Rita Corn (812) 482-1491].
- May 24, Fort Wayne: Concordia High School students depart for Ludenscheid, North Rhine-Westphalia as part of a Goethe House G.A.P.P. exchange program.
- May 25, Jasper: Deutscherverein's "Western Hoedown" dance in honor of Pfaffenweiler delegation visit. [Rita Corn 482-1491].
- May 28, Indianapolis: IGHS reception & pitch-in dinner in honor of Pfaffenweiler delegation. [Ruth Scanland (317) 359-1378].
- June 4-6, Indiana Religious Heritage Tour: Southern Indiana Sites. \$10.00 [Bill Harris (317) 232-3724].
- June 8, BOARD/MEMBERSHIP MEETING: Reichmann's home in Nashville, Ind. 3:00 pm followed by pitch-in dinner. Bring a covered dish, salad or desert. Meat & drinks will be furnished. [1 mi. west of Nashville. Turn north at Nashville Opry House go 1/4 mi. Turn right 1/4 mile.]
- June 8, Indianapolis: Federation of German Societies Festival. German Park 8600 S. Meridan St. Indpls. \$1.00 / Senior Citizens Free. 7:30 pm.
- June 11-13, Indiana Religious Heritage Tour: Northern Indiana Sites. \$10.00 [Bill Harris (317) 232-3724].
- June 19, Stammtisch: Film. "Stunde Null" [1976] English subtitles. 7:30 pm 108 min. Das Deutsche Haus 401 E. Michigan Indianapolis.
- June 29, Indianapolis: Athenaeum-Turners Rheintanz. 6:30 pm. 401 East Michigan St.
- June 29-30, Indianapolis: Indpls. Soccer Club hosts Fortuna Wien team from Vienna, Austria 3:00 pm at German Park 8600 S. Meridan.

- June 30, Indianapolis: Athenaeum-Turners Germanfest featuring Harvey Phillips Noon to 6:00 pm. 401 E. Michigan Street.
- July 6, Indianapolis: German American Klub Auxiliary Festival at German Park 8600 S. Meridan St. \$1.00 7:30 pm.
- July 9, BOARD/MEMBERSHIP MEETING in Decatur, Indiana. Arrangements call Dick Heller (219) 724-4211.
- July 17, Stammtisch: Bill Selm speaking on Oldenburg, Indiana 7:30 pm Das Deutsche Haus 401 E. Michigan Street Indpls.
- July 20, Tour of Oldenburg and Freudenfest. Arrangements call Bob Swan (317) 635-6336.
- July 20, Indianapolis: Maennerchor Festival at German Park 8600 S. Meridan St. 7:30 pm. \$1.00.
- July 23, Reservations due for August Board/Membership meeting in Zionsville, Ind. [W. D. Renner (317) 873-2384].
- July 24, Shipshewanna: Reception for QUOB singers at Shipshewanna Flea Market and visit to Amish Homestead.
- July 25, Goshen: QUOB Singers concert at the Goshen High School 8:00 pm.
- July 26, QUOB Singers performance at the Elkhart County Fair in the afternoon.
- July 27, Indianapolis: Gardners Societies Festival at German Park featuring the QUOB Singers 7:00 pm \$1.00 8600 S. Meridan Street.
- Aug. 1-4, Jasper: Strassenfest on the town square. Parade on Sunday. [Rita Corn (812) 482-6866].
- Aug. 8-10, Evansville: Germania Maennerchor Volkfest 916 N. Fulton Ave. 5:00 pm \$1.00.
- Aug. 9-10, Vincennes: Germanfest at Highland Woods 6:00 to Midnight. [1 mi. South on US 41
- Aug. 10, Indianapolis: Saenger-Chor Festival at German Park 8600 S. Meridan St. 7:30 pm \$1.00.
- Aug. 13, BOARD/MEMBERSHIP MEETING in Zionsville, Ind. 11:30 am lunch at Gisela's Kaffee-kranzchen; 1:00 pm meeting at Patrick Sullivan Museum.
- Aug. 21, Stammtisch: Film. "Der Plötzliche Reichtum der Armen Leute von Kumbach" [1971]. English subtitles. 7:30 pm 102 min. Das Deutsche Haus 401 E. Michigan Street Indianapolis.
- Aug. 24, Indianapolis: Athenaeum-Turners Ox Roast. 6:30 pm. 401 East Michigan St.
- Aug. 30-31, Indianapolis: Federation of German Societies Oktoberfest 1985 at German Park 8600 S. Meridan St. 7:30 pm \$2.00.
- Sept. 6-7, Indianapolis: Federation of German Societies Oktoberfest. (see above).
- Sept. 6-7, Terre Haute: German Oberlander Club Oktoberfest.
- Sept. 10, BOARD MEETING 12:00 Noon. Das Deutsche Haus 401 East Michigan Street. Indpls.
- Sept. 11, Indianapolis: "300 Years of German Painting" exhibition at Indianapolis Museum of Art from the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne. Runs until Nov. 10.
- Sept. 13-14, Terre Haute: German Oberlander Club Oktoberfest.
- Sept. 18, Stammtisch: "Parallels: German Romantic Landscape Painting and The Hudson River School" lecture by Hollister Sturges, Chief Curator I.M.A. 8:00 pm DeBoest Lecture Hall Indpls. Museum of Art.
- Sept. 21- New Harmony: Kunstfest and Tour
- Oct. 6, German-American Day
- Oct. 16, Stammtisch: "A New Look at Regional Art History: The Hoosiers in Context." Lecture by Dr. William Gerdts, City Univ. of New York 8:00 pm Indiana State Museum Auditorium.

Mail your events to the Newsletter so we can keep everyone up to date on Indiana-German happenings.



GERMAN PROTESTANT HERITAGE
STUDY IN RIPLEY COUNTY

David E. Dreyer, an IGHS member, has undertaken a research project studying the German protestant heritage in Ripley County. Mr. Dreyer is focusing his study on Sunman, Adams Township, in which many Luthern and Methodist German immigrants settled in the mid-1800's. Evidently, a large number of these Germans came from Wachendorf, near Hannover. They left few papers of a personal nature, but they kept good vital records of their origins and major family events.

Mr. Dreyer's project will attempt to bring this heritage to life by publishing the available correspondence, organizing family data, and re-establishing the links between families and communities to their German origins.

Much of the focus will be on families associated with the Adams Lutheran Church where excellent translations of church records exist, thanks to Richard Thielig of Sunman.

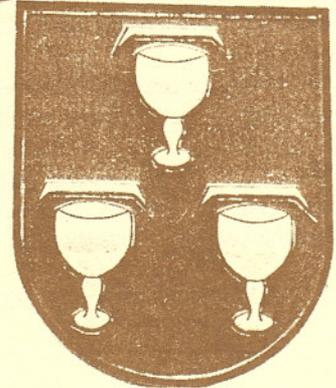
Since Mr. Dreyer does not speak German, he is in need of a bi-lingual contact in Germany who would be interested in this project. Mr. Dreyer will be working in the Osnabrück and Bremen area for about two weeks. Anyone who has information for Mr. Dreyer may reach him via the Newsletter.

Stammtisch

The Indiana German Heritage Society has instituted a monthly Stammtisch for our members and guests. We invite all to come to Das Deutsche Haus—Athenaeum every third Wednesday of the month to hear lectures, see films, sing songs, and participate in lively discussion about our German and Indiana German culture and heritage.

Most Stammtisch programs begin at 7:30 pm except when noted. Come early and have supper before the program. The German Haus Restaurant in the historic Das Deutsche Haus—Athenaeum Rathskeller begins serving at 6:00 pm. Attending supper is not a prerequisite for attending the Stammtisch program. The Athenaeum would appreciate reservations being made so they know how many to set up for.

It is our goal to be able to send the Stammtisch programs out into the state for regional and local use. For more information about the Stammtisch programs contact your regional representative or Bill Selm.



MAYPOLE BEING BUILT FOR JASPER

When finished, Jim Corn's maypole will stand proudly and silently, reminding everyone of Jasper's connection with its German sister city, Pfaffenweiler. Mr. Corn is carving it by hand for Jasper's Deutscherverein and the city's Strassenfest.

From different levels of this 32-foot structure will hang plaque-like depictions of people with several different occupations common to both Jasper and Pfaffenweiler. It will show such things as a farmer, miller, stone mason, carpenter, baker and timber cutter. At the bottom, on one side, will be the black, red, and yellow eagle that is the symbol of Jasper's German Club; on the other side will be three yellow wine glasses on a red background, the symbol of Pfaffenweiler. At the top will be a ring of greenery. Bavarian blue and white stripes will be painted on most of the pole.

The creation of this maypole symbolizes the re-emergence of an old German tradition. It is part of a cultural heritage which once belonged to all our ancestors. Today, it is the outcome one town's re-discovery of its German heritage and its efforts to bring it back to life again in Indiana. As families and communities continue their search for their German heritage, we can expect to hear more stories like Jasper's maypole.

[Dubois County Herald & Gabriella Jacobs]

