GERMAN UNIFICATION—BERLIN OCT. 3, 1990

BY RICHARD ASKREN, IGHS CORRESPONDENT

As I gazed upon the Reichstag building with flags waving in the bright afternoon sun, I wondered how I could describe what I’d witnessed in the past 24 hours to those who would ask: "How did it go in Berlin?" I was painfully aware that no matter how hard I would try, no reply, however detailed, would suffice. Hopefully, the following will provide some idea of what happened on that memorable day.

As I gazed upon the Reichstag building with the giant black, red and gold flags waving to full size in the pleasant afternoon breeze, my thoughts drifted into memories of the first time my eyes examined the structure and its surroundings. That was 1970—quite a different time indeed. Then, instead of a bright blue sky filled with warm sunshine, a cold gray sky hung over the old parliament building only adding to its empty, dreary appearance. Not a living creature was to be seen. Grass grown in the cracks in the wide sidewalks. The hated Berlin Wall stood cold, gray and formidable immediately to the east. It was a vista that depressed me. I knew that the immense military power of the Soviet Union was only a few hundred yards away. The Reichstag building seemed to remind a little of the Indiana State Capitol Building.

As I gazed upon the Reichstag building, glowing in the beautiful Berlin afternoon sun, it seemed as if the forces of nature were bidding welcome to the new reunified Germany. The crowds of people walking about or having a picnic on the grass added a full spectrum of color to the banners, flags, tents and television equipment that still remained from the night before. The crowds of people reminded me of the hundreds of thousands of people who last night had turned the area around the Reichstag and Brandenburg Gate into a sea of humanity. Elaine, my wife, and I along with Prof. Toni Holtmann and his daughter, Heike, had taken the subway to downtown Berlin and joined the river of people who were walking first west on Unter den Linden to the Brandenburg Gate then back to the east past the Soviet Embassy (which was understandably quiet) toward the Red City Hall (Rotes Rathaus) then turning back again to the west toward the Brandenburg Gate. It was Oktoberfest, the Fourth of July, the 500 Mile Race and Christmas all rolled into one. Music all the way from classical to rock was playing at various locations from live bands or over loud speakers. The streets were lined with food vendors and souvenir booths. We paused for a drink and a snack about 10 PM, then continued to a spot near the Brandenburg Gate where we witnessed the fireworks and the celebration at midnight.

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The Reichstag Building on German Unification Day, 3 Oktober 1990.
Photo by Richard Askren
It seemed that television crews from all over the world were there. The Brandenburg Gate, the Reichstag and the surrounding area were lit up as bright as day. People walked by us in a constant flow, singing, carrying cameras or signs and were wearing all sorts of different hats and coats. It was a happy but not unruly mob. Toni had very thoughtfully brought Sekt (Champagne) so we could toast the new Germany at midnight. I’ve seen many Fourth of July fireworks shows, but never a better one than what they put on for us. I cannot explain the magic that happened that night a midnight, but somehow I felt a little different. As I gazed upon the Reichstag building, once again alive with human activity, glowing still in the afternoon sun, I noticed that, unlike back in 1970, the Berlin Wall was gone. This hated symbol of international slavery and human degradation existed now only in the history books and the memories of those of us who were there and were chilled by its presence. I, like everyone else, was glad it was gone. But I was also under no false illusions that all the problems went away as the army of souvenir hunters heckled the wall into dust. I knew that a myriad of challenges face those who are working to repair the damage of over four decades of Communist rule. But, at the same time, I was also aware that those who dare now have a chance to make a better life for themselves. It seemed appropriate to be optimistic. Things seemed that they’d be better for me as an American also—I’d probably never have to see the Indiana State Capitol building surrounded by Russian tanks or have to look over the Indianapolis Wall to wave at my family on the other side.

FOCUS ON RELIGION AT ANNUAL MEETING

Plans for the Seventh Annual Meeting are well underway. It will be held on March 16, 1991 at the Deutshe Haus-Athenaeum in cooperation with the Indiana Religious History Association and will focus on the religious life in Indiana.

Several speakers have expressed willingness to present papers. The topic of Robert Smith, Wolcottville, IN, the Archivist of the Indiana District of the Lutheran Church MS, will be either "Szymanowicz" or "Early Missouri Synod Activities." Robert W. Koenig, Plainville, IN, retired pastor of Roberts Park Methodist Church, Indianapolis, is planning to speak about "Evangelical United Brethren," Joseph White, Indianapolis and History PhD from Notre Dame, would address the "History of Catholic Seminar Education In the U.S." or "The Benedictines of St. Meinrad and Church Education." Donald Hochstetler, Director of Marian College Library and History PhD from Michigan State, will speak about "The Mennonites and the Amish in Indiana."

For the keynote we hope to be able to invite a specialist on "Religion in Germany During the 18th Century," to provide an understanding of the values (the quality of religious commitment and congregational life) immigrants brought with them.

For the afternoon, a program of German and German-American religious and choral music and an exhibit is planned at Zion Evangelical Church.

Annual Meeting co-chairs are Ruth Reichmann, ICHS President Emeritus and James Divita, IRHA President.

WINTER STAMMTISCHS

Programs have been set for the January and March Stammtischs. St. Nikolaus Tag will take the place of a December program and Karneval will take the place of a February presentation.

January 9     Ain Haas, IUFUI, Ethnic "Germans in Estonia" (including a video on the topic).

March 13    Christiana Seiler, IUFUI, "Weimar Revisited." Weimar, the site of Germany's first democracy, is located in former East Germany and was not open to western researchers. Ms. Seiler will conclude with a poetry reading.

All Stammtischs are at 7:30 PM with an optional dinner at 6:00 PM. For more information on the programs, contact Claudia Grossmann at 274-2812.
GERMAN-AMERICAN VIDEO FILM SERIES

As was announced in the Fall Newsletter a series of video films is being offered by the German-American Center of the Athenaeum and the German Language Center at the Cafe Heidelberg on Pendleton Pike in Indianapolis. The films, which are being offered free of charge, will be shown at 7:30 PM at the Athenaeum, 401 East Michigan.

The schedule for films is as follows:

November 30 PORTRAIT OF GERMANY—Color, 60 min., English language. Although Germany has been devastated by many wars, it has risen from the ashes to take its place as one of the world's great nations. Enjoy this film as it showcases the natural beauty and priceless heritage of this great country.

December 28 DEUTSCHE WEIHNACHT—ALLE JAHRE WIEDER: (German Christmas Show)—Color, 60 min., German language. This video film was shot on location in Ramsau, Koenigssee, Nuremberg, and Dinkelsbuhl. Various individuals as well as famous choirs and groups sing your favorite Christmas songs.

January 25 BARON MUNCHAUSEN (1943)—AGFA color, 110 min., German with English subtitles. Follow the antics of the famous Baron at the Russian Court at St. Petersburg.

February 22 DIE MOSEL and CHARMING SALZBURG—This double feature is sure to please everybody. Enjoy the beautiful Mosel River with its steep vineyards where some of Germany's finest wines are produced. Visit such towns as Cochem, Zell, Bernkastel and follow the Roman wine road to ancient Trier. Once you see the beautiful city of Salzburg, located in the heart of Europe and Mozart's birthplace, you will want to start planning your vacation.

If you desire reservations for the evening meal at the Athenaeum Rathskeller at 6 PM, phone 636-0396. For more details on the videos, call Ralph or Carol Kastner at 831-5055.

FORT WAYNE NEWS

ARCH, Inc., an organization for Historic Preservation in Fort Wayne, has received a grant for $22,400 for a survey of historic resources in Allen County, 1990-1991. Among the settlements to be surveyed are the Old Order Amish and Mennonite community in Milan and Maumee townships, the large German Lutheran settlement in Marion, Madison and Monroe townships which include St. John's Flatrock, Soest and other churches, and German Catholic settlements in Pleasant and Marion Townships at St. Joseph, Heßzen Cassel and St. Aloysius, Yoder.

A preliminary survey of Eel River and Perry townships in northwestern Allen County revealed a community known as Dutch Ridge, settled by German natives from Pennsylvania around 1840. The settlers were reportedly soldiers of fortune from the War of 1812 who were given land in the Lancaster area, then came west in search of better soil when the Indiana lands were opened. Settlers' surnames, many still extant on the farms, include Garman, Warner, Fredericks, Reinhold, Myers and Hensinger. The church, known as the Dutch Ridge Salem Reformed Church, was decommisioned in 1978, but the brick building, constructed in 1876, stands and is the residence of an IBM salesman. The cemetery is across the road, although their locations were originally reverse. The Dutch Ridge one room school also remains as a residence.

By Phyllis Brockmyer

KARNEVAL—FEBRUARY 9

Although the holidays are still in full swing, it is not too early to start preparations for the pre-Lenten celebration of Karneval/Fasching. The fourth annual IGHS/Athenaeum sponsored event will take place on Saturday, February 9, at the Athenaeum/Deutsche Haus, 401 E. Michigan Street in Indianapolis.

The grand carnival party will again follow the Rhineland traditions Indianapolis' sister city of Cologne. The German equivalent of the New Orleans Mardi Gras in this country is among the traditions are the Elfer Rath (Council of Eleven) presented over by President or Chief Fool, Buttonreden (barrel speeches) or satiric speeches delivered from inside wine barrels, and the Driegestern (Triad of Stars) consisting of a peasant, a virgin and the Karneval Prince. Included in the celebration will be dinner and dancing, and processions of masked revelers reflecting the great German Karneval/Fasching tradition. Costumes by those attending are highly recommended. A number of additional surprises are also being planned.

The tradition of the German Karneval and Masked Ball in Indianapolis dates from the middle of the last century when German organizations such as the Maennerchor held grand festivals to rival anything done in the Midwest. To be a part of this year's Karneval, call the Athenaeum at 317-636-0396 for reservations, which should be made about three days in advance. Get out your costume and enjoy a fascinating part of Indiana's German Heritage.

GERMAN FOR CHILDREN

The Continuing Studies Program at IUPUI is continuing its classes on German for children starting on Saturday, February 2, from 9-11:30 AM at the Mary Colby Building on the Michigan Street Campus. There will be three sections: Kindergarten; Ages 6 through 9; and Ages 10-13. The fee for the twelve Saturday courses is $55 per student, with a discount for two or more enrollees. For more information, contact Continuing Studies at 274-5059.
PALATINES TO AMERICA

There is a national genealogical society available for those seeking the origin of their German-speaking immigrant ancestors. It is the Palatines to America. The Palatine name was chosen because most of the 17th and 18th century German immigrants were from the Palatinate, or were so identified by the British clerks in Philadelphia. However, we encourage research and study of all German-speaking immigrants, from what is now Germany, Switzerland, Austria, parts of Poland, France, Russia, etc.

Membership in the national society also includes membership in a state chapter, of which there are eight: Indiana, Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. People in Virginia and California are considering organizing chapters. There is a three-day National Genealogy Conference every June. The one in June, 1989 was held at Marian College, Indianapolis, and the next one was at Nazareth College, Kalamazoo, Michigan. The 1991 conference will be June 20-22 at Cobleskill College, Cobleskill, New York, near where Sir William Johnson was able to settle the Palatines who were sent by Queen Anne to make ship supplies such as pitch, tar and rope.

The dues are $19 for an individual and $21 for a family. The national chapter publishes a quarterly journal, THE IMMIGRANT, as well as a quarterly newsletter, THE PALATINE PATTER. There is an immigrant ancestor register and pedigree charts to the immigrant ancestor which have been published.

The Indiana Chapter president is Dr. Robert McDougal. There are several Palatines who also belong to IGHS. Many IGHS members have indicated their interest in genealogy, and Palatines to America is one group which can assist in fostering that interest.

The chapter has a workshop in the fall and an all-day lecture/seminar meeting in the spring, as well as a state newsletter. This fall’s workshop was on October 6 at Indiana University, Bloomington. Included in the program was an introduction to the Indiana University Library, with tours and instruction as to its holdings and how to gain access to library materials. Also available was a tour of the Lilly Library of manuscripts and rare books. The spring 1991 seminar will be all day Saturday, May 11, in Indianapolis, with the well-known professional German Genealogist, Herr Henning Schroeder, R.G., as the featured speaker. Schroeder is an author and lecturer who lives in Gummersbach, Nordrein-Westfalen. He is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, Salt Lake City, and specializes in records for the Rhineland, Westphalia, Hesse, Saxony and Luxembourg. Schroeder will also offer advice on how to do research in what was East Germany.

For more membership information, contact Dr. McDougal in Indianapolis, 317-665-8031, or Membership Chair Nancy I. Meyer in Tipton, 317-575-2945.

By Dr. Robert McDougal

EUROPEAN TURNERS TO PERFORM AT FEST

The 48th National Turnfest will be held in Indianapolis from June 26-30, 1991, and it will attract participants from across the ocean for the first time in over 60 years.

If one is to look for the word "Turner" in an English Dictionary, it would be impossible to locate. "Turner" is a German term meaning "gymnast" and "turnen" means to do gymnastics or physical exercises, but it means much more. Back in Germany, the Turners were followers of "Father" Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852), the modern founder of an all-embracing fitness concept. The Turners accepted his educational tenets of sound body and mind through physical fitness and all around mental and cultural development.

In a Symposium, "Sports, Society and the Turners," to be held in conjunction with the Turnfest on June 26, 1991 at the IUPUI Convention Center, speakers will explore the role of the American Turners, their German origins and their impact on physical education.

A second session will deal with the "Normal College of the American Gymnastic Union of Indiana University" which was located in the east wing of the Athenaeum Building from 1907-1941. This session will deal with the origin of the Normal College, its program, its objectives, its relationship to the American Turners and the public schools and its connection to Indiana University.

A panel discussion will round out the program. In the framework of German-American relations, a panel of experts of German and U.S. Turners, members of the Cologne and Indianapolis Sister Cities committee, and others will discuss education and physical fitness in schools and Turnvereins today and explore possibilities for cooperation.

BOARD NOMINATIONS

A nominating committee has been appointed by the IGHS Board of Directors for submitting names of potential candidates for election to the Board at the Annual Meeting in March, 1991. Nominations are welcome from the membership. Any IGHS member who is interested in submitting their name and qualifications to the committee for consideration, may either write to the IGHS Nominating Committee, 401 E. Michigan St., Indianapolis, IN 46204 or contact one of the nominating committee members:

Halbert Kunz, chairman, 317-251-0026, Richard Askren, 317-356-1844 or Paul Brockman, 317-841-6126. Board members must be paid up members of the Indiana German Heritage Society and should be able to attend at least six of the meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at the Athenaeum at 1:00 PM.
KLAUS SCHRAMEYER

Dr. Klaus Schrameyer, former Consulate General in Detroit, has been reassigned to Europe. Dr. Schrameyer was a good friend and supporter to all Hoosier Germans and will be missed. We hope to continue this relationship with his successor. We feature some of his recent activities in Indiana.

Presenting Eberhard Reichmann with the Cross of Merit at the Athenaeum on October 6, 1990, German-American Day.


MIXIN' de LANGUAGES

With the passing of time in an immigrant's life it is not easy to keep the mother tongue "pure", i.e. without substituting English vocabulary items and constructions. This ranges from occasional--sometimes intentional--to massive substituting. With German-speaking immigrants the latter is often, but erroneously, considered to be Pennsylvania Dutch--which is a genuine German-American dialect that has nothing to do with "Throw the cow over the fence some hay" and other good-for-laughs little cuties printed on napkins.

Here is a poetic sample in which substituting is carried to a hilarious degree. It has the advantage that you'll readily understand it without having to know much German. Our source is DIE ALLERSCHÖNSTE LENGEVITZ, a fun collection (Crown Publishers, 1953) by the anonymous author K.S.M. You might get some Christmas ideas out of it!

Unlucky Horseshoe

Der Schneider hat a Horseshoe aufgepickt
Den tut er von a Nails beim Door suspendeh
Und yellt, "Owgooste, darling, komm und look:
A Lucky Symbol, wo uns Glück wurd sendeh."

Die Mama, wo zu "Vogue" subscribeh tut,
Kommt schnell und hellert, "Pa, das Ding muss raus!"
Es shpolitz den Rhythm der converging Lines,
Und schaut, beseits, auch zu Victorian aus."

Das macht den Schneider nad. Er shlammt da Door.
Der Schu' droppt auf sei Shkalp und tut ihn hush.
Die Moral, Kinder, iss dass nowadays
Man even Lucky Symbols net kann truseth.

Day After Christmas

"S war der Day after Christmas. All over im Haus
Gab's Papers und Boxes--a Sign jetzt ist's aus.
Und die Mama sagt, "Papa, 's gomb Turkey for Lunch."
Un der Papa repleit, "Ja, ich hatt' so a Bunch."

Und die Mama sagt, "Papa, da hast du den Broom
Tu die Needles aufshweepoem vom Rug im Frontroom.
Umn denn kannst du starteh die dishes zu dreein
Wo in Dishwasher immer noch aufgestacked sein.

Und denn telephonat du der Tante Marie
Und gibst ihr dei humbleh Apologee.
Sie iss a damfool, und ich kann sie net stenden,
But du brauchst sie net reqlar zu Christmas offende.
Und fix mir die Lights auf am Top von dem Tree.
Hoet Abend komt maybe noch Company."

By Eberhard Reichmann

REICHMANN NAMED FL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

At their Annual Meeting on October 26, the Indiana Foreign Language Teachers Association and the Indiana Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of German recognized Prof. Eberhard Reichmann as University Teacher of the Year. Earlier this fall, Reichmann received high honors from his native Federal Republic of Germany, the Cross of Merit.

Reichmann has been a professor of German at Indiana University since 1959. He is nationally and internationally known for his work and leadership in the teaching of the German language and culture, and for his pioneering work on Indiana's German heritage.

Thomas Nast, born in Landau in 1840, is the creator of today's image of Santa Claus. Nast created the image for Union soldiers during the Civil War, recalling Knecht Ruprecht from his youth in Germany. Since he was his own model, Santa Claus is rather small, heavy and smiling somewhat shrewdly. The popularity of Nast's Santa Claus drawings continued to be in great demand after the War, and in 1889, Harper's printed a volume of "Thomas Nast's Drawings for the Human Race."
GERMAN DRAMA AT D-H, INDIANAPOLIS

On Sunday, December 2, at 3 PM, a German language play will be presented in the newly renovated ballroom at the Deutsche Haus Athenaeum. "Sieben Türen" and "Die Ledertasche" by Botho Strauss, winner of the 1989-Büchner Prize, will be performed by students of Prof. Gabriell Bersier. The program is sponsored by the IUPUI German Department in association with the American Cabaret Theatre Apprenticeship and Internship Program. Tickets are $5 for adults and $2.50 for students. For further information, call Prof. Bersier at 317-274-8246.

SGAS SYMPOSIUM IN D.C. FOR 1991

The German Department of Georgetown University, the German Heritage Society of Greater Washington, D.C., and the German Historical Institute will host the 15th Symposium of the Society for German-American Studies on April 25-28, 1991, in Washington D.C. In presenting the Symposium in our Nation's Capital, the focus will be on the dual aspects of German-Americans in greater Washington, D.C., and the impact on German history and German-American relations, past and present, on the United States. For more information, contact Professor Volker K. Schmeissner, 703-845-6242.

MEMBERSHIP & RENEWAL

Indiana German Heritage Society
401 East Michigan Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

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New Member Renewal
Contributors of $50 or more will be listed in the Tricentennial Edition.

Please make checks payable to the Indiana German Heritage Society.

If you wish to join or renew your membership, please enclose your check with this statement today. Our membership year is from January 1st through December 31st. To increase society support you may wish to designate a higher category. Contributions are tax deductible on itemized returns.

My areas of interest are: (e.g. genealogy, family history, local and state history, religious history, traditions, education, cultural and educational exchanges, etc.)

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November 30: Film—PORTRAIT OF GERMANY, 7:30 PM, Athenaeum, Indianapolis

December 1: St. Nikolaus Fest, 3-5 PM, Athenaeum, Indianapolis, Reservations by Nov. 28, 317-636-0396

December 12: IGHS Board of Directors Meeting, 1:00 PM Athenaeum, Indianapolis

December 29: Film—DEUTSCHE WEIHNACHT—ALLE JAHRE WIEDER, 7:30 PM, Athenaeum, Indianapolis

January 9: IGHS Board of Directors Meeting, 1:00 PM, Athenaeum, Indianapolis

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January 25: Film—BARON MÜNCHHAUSEN, 7:30 PM Athenaeum, Indianapolis

February 9: Karneval, Athenaeum, 317-636-0396

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March 13: IGHS Board of Directors Meeting, 1:00 PM, Athenaeum, Indianapolis

March 13: Stammtisch—Christiana Seiler, IUPUI, "Weimar Revisited."

March 16: IGHS ANNUAL MEETING, Athenaeum, Indianapolis, 9:00 AM-5:00 PM