INDIANA GERMAN HERITAGE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

FALL, 1995 VOLUME 11 NUMBER 4

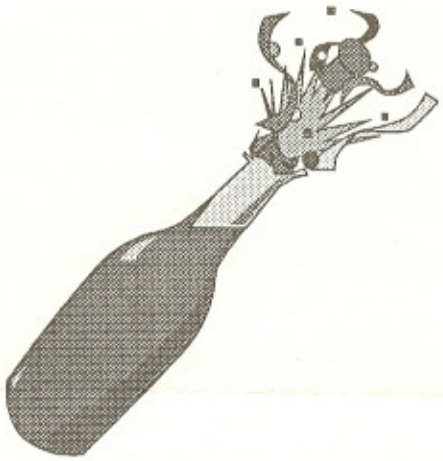
PARTICIPATE IN GERMAN-AMERICAN DAY—OCTOBER 6

Just as Irish-Americans celebrate St. Patrick's Day and invite everybody to participate in the celebrations, on German-American Day we invite everyone to celebrate with us.

The Indiana German Heritage Society has been the catalyst for this celebration. However, our role is strictly one of coordinating the public event, and of reminding others to celebrate this day in their club, their organization or church. Americans of German descent have contributed must to the growth, strength and vitality of the Hoosier State. With 37.5% of our population claiming some German ancestry, we are still the largest ethnic group in the state.

We invite you and your organization to take part in the public celebration in Indianapolis. It will be held Friday, 6 October, from 11 A.M. to 1 P.M. at the City Market Plaza. There will be tables to distribute literature, sell your books and T-shirts, etc. There also will be music, dancers and speeches.

In case of rain, the celebration will move inside the City Market. This is our chance to celebrate our heritage in a public setting and share it with the lunchtime crowd on the West Plaza of the City Market.



ATHENAEUM OCTOBERFEST

Join the Athenaeum Foundation for its annual Octoberfest on Friday, 6 Octoberfest, from 6-11 P.M. Included in the evening's activities is a delicious German style buffet, dancing to the music of ENCORE, the Athenaeum Orchestra from 6:30-7:30, and German folk music and dance.

Tickets are $12.50 in advance and $15.00 at the door and includes food and entertainment. Sales are limited to 500. To register in advance, send check to Athenaeum Foundation, Inc., 401 E. Michigan St., Indpls, 46204 or phone 317-4569. Visa & Mastercard

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OCT. 20-22

The annual International Festival sponsored by the Nationalities Council of Indiana will be held from 20-22 October at the Indiana State Fairgrounds West Pavilion. This time the layout will be in the form of four different *Villages*: Americas, Asia, Africa and Europe. Each village court will have its own performances and interactive activities which will be taking place at various locations.

We will have two booths (C9 and C10) back to back with the German-American Klub being right next to us. We again are asking for IGHS members to volunteer with the staffing of our booths. We also need help with advance ticket sales: adult tickets are $3.50 in advance ($5.00 at the door). Children 6-12 are $2.50 and under 6 are free. If you are willing to help a few hours at the Festival or sell tickets, please contact Ruth Reichmann at the German-American Center, 401 E. Michigan Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204. For further information call the Center at 317-464-9004, Ernestine Dillon at 317-861-5831 or Ruth Reichmann at 812-988-2866.

ETHNIC EXPO IN COLUMBUS, OCT. 13-15

The ETHNIC EXPO will take place 13-15 October in and around the Columbus City Hall. Friday will feature a Street Dance, starting at 8:30 P.M. Saturday evening there will be fireworks at 7:30 P.M. We will have a booth there on Sat-

AMERICAN AND GERMAN TURNERS SIGN FRIENDSHIP AGREEMENT

Forty German Turners joined American Turners from around the nation for the American Turners National Festival in South Bend and participated in competitions ranging from diving and fencing to gymnastics. Ruth Reichmann and Gabi Botts hade planned a side tour for the German Turners and IGHS members. They traveled to nearby Amish Country with lunce at the Dutchman Essenhaus in Middelbury, a tour of an Amish farm and a visit to the Menno-Hof in Shipshewana. The linguistic highlight of this trip was the attempt by the Germans to understand the Amish dialect and to converse with our Amish guides. Turners from the Palatinate, Hesse and southwest Germany fared best; folks from northern Germany needed language expertise of Turner Eberhard Reichmann who served as principal interpreter at the Turnfest.

At the Banquet on Saturday, 9 July, American Turner President Walter Pfister announced the signing of a friendship charter agreement between the Deutscher Turner Bund and the American Turners. German Turner Guenter Ruhrig, representing German Turner President, Dr. Juerger Dieckert invited American Turners to the next German Turnfest, which will be held in Munich in 1998.

The year 1998 will be an important one for the Turners with an international symposiums scheduled for the Paulskirche in Frankfurt/M for 28-31 May to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first democratic parliament. A symposium, sponsored by the Society of German-American Studies will focus on the German 48ers who were forced into exile, generally to Switzerland, then England and eventually the United States, following the failed revolutions inspired by the 1848 Paulskirche meetings.

Ruth Reichmann

THE MENNO-HOF IN SHIPSHE-WANA

Located in Sheipshewana, in the heart of Northern Indiana's Amish country, Menno-Hof is the ome of an epic story of triumph and tragedy toldy by those who lived it in centuries gone by. Amish builders erected Menno-Hof's barn structure using mammother, rough sawn oak beams fastened together only by knee braces and wooden pegs.

Artistss labored alongside Amish and Mennonite crafts people to present the stories featured inside the Menno-Hof. Colorful displays and a multimedia presentation take the visitor into the unique world of three Annabaptist groups: the Mennonites, the Amish and the Hutterites. Follow the trail of a people searching for peace. Learn about the Mennonites' emergence in the year 1525 and their sufferings and martyrdom during the ruthless persecution by state and church authorities. Learn why in 1693 the Amish broke from the Mennonites, why the Amish drive buggies and wear plain clothes.

In order for German-speaking visitors to Menno-Hof to fully understand the voice part of the multimedia show, Professor Eberhard Reichmann has translated the program and will direct the German recording. The Menno-Hof is open Monday-Saturday, 10-5. For further information, call 219-768-4117.

PALATINES INVITE KLAUS WURST

Klaus Wurst will be the featured speaker of the 28 October meeting of the Palatine's Indiana Chapter. Spanning 46 years of researching the German-Americans, Wurst's career and his numerous and distinguished publications make him the senior scholar in the field of German-American Studies. He has lectured on American culture and history worldwide. —Information: Jr Feit, 317-875-7210.

BACK TO THE ROOTS

The U.S. Census Bureau estimate that 57.9 million Americans have German roots and German names (though often Americanized); Help comes now from Hamburg's "Staedte Bruecke/City Bridges" Association in the form of meetings, starting August 1995. The purpose of these meetings, starting August 1995. The purpose of these meetings is to assist in clarifying the family connections between the descendants of emigrants and their counterparts in the old country.

The family names held in common can be a natural starting point. Therefore, the idea is to look for Americans and Germans with the same names and "to bring them together" as "still unknown namesakes," or to find unknown relatives.

Several time a year the Association issues lists with names of Germans looking for their namesakes or relatieves. Enclose a self-addressed envelope and include "Coupon Response International" from your post office for $2.30 with each letter (**no stamps, no cash**). You also may send names you are looking for in Germany. They will be sent to the Association's 39,000 members, to cities and organizations, even to the press and radio. Address: Staedte-Bruecke e.V., Postfach 76 04 44, 22054 Hamburg, Germany

ROOTS & GENERAL von STEUBEN

Finally Gemany discovered for itself it son who gained historic success, Frierich Wilhelm von Steuben, who emigrated to America in 1778. General George Washington entrusted his soldiers to him in the War of Independence, von Steuben was not able to

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speak one work of English at the time.

The idea of honoring von Steuben, as is done at New York's Annual Steuben Parade on 17 September, has now been "exported" to the country of the General's origin. In more than 50 German cities a gigantic birthday party will take place in September, 1996, over a 10 day span. The center of the party in all these cities is the "Family Meetine with Unknowns," reported in the preceeding article. Americans without German roots are just as welcome. They can be matched with Germans who have three things in common with them: age—profession—special interests. All it takes, once you are there, is a questionaire.

The final Steuben party will take place at the General's hometown of Magdeburg with members of the Steuben family present.

COLUMBUS STUDENTS MAKE HIT

Art Schwenk, German teacher at Columbus North High School and five of his and Judy Eaton's students participated in an Education Seminar at the occasion of the Annual Symposium of the Society for German-American Studies in Louisville last April. The title of their presentation was: "Revealing the German-American Experience: Local History Explorations Through Student Research Projects." Christie Blizard presented "The Effects of World War I on German Hoosiers;" Glen Cavanagh "T.J. Koch;" Linday Jordan "Schwartzkpf Family Business in Columbus;" and Nicholas Weimer and Scott Mathison "The Bauhaus and Architecture in Columbus."

The students made a hit with everyone who participated in the Education Symposium. Especially impressed were the German olleagues, Dr. Dirk Schroeder and Dr. Wolfgang Grams from the Bremen Project. Many conference participants state how refreshing it was to have these young researchers present at the conference opening (they received a standing ovation) and how they appreciated the student projects that were exhibed in the Hall.

A SURVEY OF GERMAN-AMERICAN MUSEUMS, HISTORIC SITES, ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES IN NORTH AMERICA

At a meeting in Louisville last April, members of the Society for German-American Studies agreed on the need to identify historic sites such as New Harmony, Indiana, the Amana settlements in Iows, German-American museums, important monuments, early German productions facilites as well as archives and libraries with holdings of German Americana. The next meeting/conference will take place 3 and 4 November 1995 at the Max Kade German-American Center in Indianapolis.

The "Survey of German-American Museums, Historic Sites, Archives and Libraries" is to be an inventory of the heritage of America's largest ethnic group. It involves the search and description of a vast number of possible entries. It will require the involvement and cooperation of many person and the research from several disciplines throughout North America. Envisioned is a broad basis of nationwide, Canadian, and German documentation, i.e. a comprehensive guide to the sources and manifestations benefitting researchers as well as the general public and visitors from abroad. Both scope and methods of data collecting and cataloging need to be defined. Specialists from the Library System of IUPUI will design a prototype "homepage" as a model for information dissemination. The collected information will then travel the information highway via World Wide Web.

Anyone can participate in this big undertaking by sending appropriate information especially of their region or locality, addresses, names, description, dates, etc. of sites, museums or library holdings to: "Survey," Max Kade German-American Center, 401 E. Michigan St., Indianapolis, IN 46204; Fax 317-630-0035; E-mail Reichmann@ucs.Indiana.edu

CONVERSATION & PROGRAMS

A variety of programs are planned for the second Wednesday of the month (Oct. 11, Nov. 8, Dec. 13). These programs are presented in English and are free of charge to the public. They are held at 7:30 P.M. in the Max Kade Seminar Room on the first floor of the Athenaeum, 401 East Michigan St.

Anyone interested in sharpening German speaking and listening skills is invited to join IGHS members for dinner, prior to the program, 6 P.M. at the Athenaeum Rathskeller Restaurant. No Stammtisch and program in January!

STAMMTISCH

The Stammtisch (or round table) for advanced and fluent speakers meets on the third Thursday evening (Oct. 19, Nov. 16, Dec. 21) of the month. If you would like to practice your German join us for dinner at 6 P.M. in the Kneipe of the Rathskeller Restaurant. No Stammtisch in January!

For further information call vice-president Ernestine Dillon at 317-861-5831 or president Buddy McCart at 317-846-8613.

For information on the Brown County Chapter, comprising the Nashville, Bloomington, Columbus area, contact chapter president Al Mood of Nashville at 812-988-6621 or 988-6285.

PARTNERS WITH SCHOOLS—THE GERMAN HERITAGE FOLKLORE GROUP

The Max Kade German-American Center is sponsoring a German Heritage Folklore Group, made up of former teachers and individuals with folklore skills, such as storytelling, singing, dancing, games, Scheerenschnitte, etc. They offer programs at ethnic festivals, to German and Social Studies classrooms, to Scouts, the Athenaeum and other organizations. They are looking for others who would be willing to get involved. No special skills, only an interest in German heritage is needed. Contact Ruth Reichmann at the Max Kade German-American Center, 317-646-9004 or 812-988-2866.

GERMAN FOLKDANCING

Three reasons to participate. It is:

1. aerobically healthy;
2. culturally enriching;
3. socially enhancing;

and it is fun!

You are invited to participate in German folkdancing with the German Heritage Folklore Group. Meet on the third Monday of the month, beginning at 7 P.M. in the Auditorium on the first floor of the Athenaeum, 401 East Michigan St., Indianapolis. For information contact Ginni Bullard at 812-597-4932.

LITTLE FOLK-DANCERS NEEDED

The Indianapolis German-American Klub's Kindertanzgrupp needs little dancers: If you know of a youngster who would enjoy participating, contact Jean Albers 317-988-2985 of 889-1110. The kids practice two Saturdays a month and perform at Oktoberfest. Other performances are negotiable.

FORTHCOMING THIS FALL

Eberhard Reichmann, LaVern Rippley and Joerg Nagler, editors: Emigration and Settlement Patterns of German Communities in North America. A major work of recent scholarship on German Americana, this volume features 24 articles by leading and promising younger specialists on German emigration/immigration from various disciplines and from both sides of the Atlantic. The volume's seven chapters focus on: "Demographics and Documentation," "Religious Minorities and Their Settlements," "Church and Community," "Secular Settlements: Concepts and Realities," "Continuities and Discontinuities of Regional Affinities," "Aspects of Ethnic Culture," and "Emigration and Immigration in Contexts." The book is based on papers delivered at the 1989 New Harmony Conference under that same title.—Ca. 350 pp. Special member price has been set at $16.50 from NCSA Literatur, 430 S. Kelp Grove Rd., Nashville, IN 47448.

NEW BOOKS FROM NCSA LITERATUR

"Struwwelpeter" is 150 Years Old

150 years ago, it happened that the Frankfurt neurologist Heinrich Hoffmann was unable to find a suitable picture-book for his three year old son, so he wrote and illustrated his own: Struwwelpeter. The stories about this "nasty" little boy became the most successful children's book in the German language. It is estimated that over 25 million copies of this book in verse have been sold, and it has been translated into many languages. In the U.S., "Struwwelpeter" is also known as "Slovenly Peter." In 1991, the Indianapolis Museum of Art was host to the world premier of Michael Schelle's song cycle "The Misadventures of Struwwelpeter." This year, the University of Minnesota's Children's Literature Research Collection and the German Department will celebrate the "150th" with a Struwwelpeter Symposium, 9-11 November. Get your English-language version at member discount from NCSA Literatur, 430 S. Kelp Grove Rd., Nashville, IN 47448 ($6.25 post paid).

Rudolf Cronau's "German Achievements in America"

Reprinted in a 233 pp. illustr. Heritage Books edition by D.H. Tolzmann, this concise survey, first published in 1916, is a handy introduction to German-American contributions to politics, agriculture, industry, commerce, physical education, science, publishing, literature, music and the arts. The reader may also find the chapters on "German-American Women and Their Works" and "The Future Mission of the German Element in America" interesting. Member special: $16.50 (regularly $20.50) From NCSA Literatur at the above address.

GERMAN LIFE

German Life is a BI-monthly magazine written for all interested in the diversity of German culture, past and present, and in the various ways that North America has been shaped by its German element. The magazine is dedicated to solid reporting on cultural, historical, social and political events and is colorfully illustrated.

Subscription for six issues is $17.95. To order call 1-800-314-6843 or send subscription to German Life, P.O. Box 609, Grantsville, MD 21536-9984.

THE 1916 INDIANA SONG IN GERMAN

"O Indiana, schoener Staat, wir sind dir treu ergeben..." Two members were able to identify the writer of the lyrics, Paula S. Eickhoff. She was and Indianapolis school teacher. Thanks to Mary Jo Elpers and Jim Talley.

NORBERT KRAPF READS AT STAMMTISCH

For the enjoyment of those who attended the August Stammtisch, Norbert Krapf read from **Somewhere in Southern Indiana: Poems of Midwestern Origins** and other poetry collections. The poem "The Forefather Arrives" we reprint here was one of them.

THE FOREFATHER ARRIVES

He stumbles off the ship *America*
parts from the people who
speak the only tongue he's
ever known, and leads a wife
and six children toward the middle
of a dark continent. Eight
pairs of shoes shaped by
the contours of cobbled
Bavarian streets must soon
begin to fall evenly upon
uncultivated ground. Like
a startled rabbit, the woman
cocks her ears for the pealing
of distant churchbells.
The children cling to the man's
overcoat like cockleburrs.
A sailor whose eyes blink
back to to the vineyard patching
the banks of the Main River,
he know he must learn to
navigate this foreign land
by foot. He stares at
the bark of trees he's never
seen, flinches at the songs
of birds he's never heard.
He worries about laying seed
in the soil in the spring.
He sucks in his breath,
puts down one foot at a time.

Poet and Rilke-translator Norbert Krapf was born in Jasper, IN. He teaches English at Long Island University's C.W. Post Campus. Author of 10 books, his 9th title, **Somewhere in Southern Indiana: Poems of Midwestern Origins** [Time Being Books, 1993] was applauded in American Bookseller for its evocative precision and depiction's of Franconian ancestry and the Southern Indiana wilderness. **Blue-Eyed Grass: Poems of Germany** [Time Being] is due out. A revised and expanded version of his **Finding the Grain**—including a section of letters by the pioneer and missionary, Father Joseph Kundek, large scale developer of Catholic Southern Indiana—will be published by the Max Kade German-American Center, Indianapolis.

NEW LIFE FOR THE MIGHTY RAPP GRANARY IN NEW HARMONY

Eberhard Reichmann was named to the Advisory Board for the renovation of the Rapp Granary/David Dale Owen Laboratory. Built by the Harmonists around 1818 as a granary ("Getreidescheuer"), the massive sandstone, brick and wooden structure originally had five stories. In 1827 it became part of William Maclure's holdings. In 1843, David Dale Owen bought the Granary from the Maclure estate and used it as his third geology laboratory and a museum. Headed by David L. Rice, President Emeritus of the Univ. of Southern Indiana, a foundation was recently established to raise the funds for the Granary's renovation and use as a museum and meeting facility. For information, contact the Reichmanns at 812-988-2866 or David Rice, 404 Church St., New Harmony, IN 47631.

INDIANAPOLIS MAENNERCHOR PRESENTS DOCUMENT TO GERMAN COUNTERPART

At the occasion of their great performance on 25 July at the Athenaeum, Ken Duncan of the Indianapolis Maennerchor presented the President of the Cologne Maennerchor a copy of the "Historical Documents of the Indianapolis Maennerchor's 140 Years of Music." Our thanks to Ken Duncan, a 60 year member of the Maennerchor, who also donated a copy of the documents to the German-American Archives at IUPUI. Ken's presentation speech is given below:

"When William H. Hudnut, III" the mayor of Indianapolis, signed a sister cities charter between Indianapolis and Cologne, he introduced the Lordmayor Norbert Burger. At that time, I introduced myself and asked whether they had a Maennerchor. to which he replied that they had several Maennerchors.

On May 28, 1990, I wrote a letter to Lordmayor Norbert Burger which he forwarded to the Maennerchor. This letter was to introduce myself and extend my friendship to our sister Maennerchor. I dreamed that someday the Maennerchors would meet, though I never thought it would become a reality in my lifetime. Soon after, I had a serious stroke and spent several months in speech therapy attempting to regain my speech.

In June, 1995, I received a notice that the Cologne Maennerchor was singing a concert on my stage in Indianapolis. Yes! There is a Santa Claus and I am dreaming of a White Christmas in July.!

Thanks to the Cologne Maennerchor, the cities of Indianapolis and Cologne, the Athenaeum Foundation and its talented people.

The Indianapolis Maennerchor ended its 140th season and Cologne its 148th season. We had our share of golden years, and I'm sure you have had the same experience.

As a token of friendship, I give the Historical Documents of the Indianapolis Maennerchor's "140 Years of Music."

Corbin Patrick, music critic of the Indianapolis Star, said of the Indianapolis Maennerchor, appropriate of the Cologne Maennerchor likewise: "There is a loyalty to eternal majesty in the maintenance of this organization of

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song and fellowship down through the years. The artistry displayed by this grand organization has richly embellished Indianapolis living, from days of greater charms down to the present. May its singers touch the hearts of men in increasing numbers and bring them back to heaven again. GOD SPEED."

NIGHT IN OLD VIENNA

Each year for the past 20 years, the Bloomington Symphony Orchestra has presented a popular fund raiser for the orchestra known as a Night in Old Vienna. It is a dinner-dance which features fine dining, Viennese style desserts and night of dancing to the music of Strauss waltzes and well known polkas, galops and other dances.

The orchestra is widening its market for the first time this year and extends an invitation to everyone in central and southern Indiana to experience this event and at the same time to introduce the Bloomington Symphony to the rest of the state.

The Night in Old Vienna is tentatively scheduled for 11 November this year. For more information, contact Ray Gibson of the Bloomington Symphony Orchestra at 812-331-2320.

WORKING TOGETHER

In his inauguration speech, George Anderson, the new president of the Indianapolis German-American Klub said: "I would like to see our members expand their cultural horizons by supporting and becoming involved with other Federation Organizations, as well as the Sister Cities program, the Indiana German Heritage Society, and so forth. As the old saying goes: the more you give, the more you get."

Who says that Germans can't work together? Thanks, George and George, Mary Ellen and Karen, Gloria and Bob!

CASTLES, BEER GARDENS AND CRUCIFISXES

Those who traveled Bavaria this summer ran into some exciting events. Bavarians were celebrating their kings, Ludwig II, fairy tale prince (the "Dream King") and builder of castles, and Ludwig III, called the Milk King because of his love for life in the country and raising milk cows. Both were born in Munich 150 years ago, both are from the line of the Wittelsbachs and both lived in Munich. In their honor two trails were developed and better than 50 programs, exhibits and parades are still keeping natives and visitor busy. The marked trail of Ludwig II begins at the castles Hohenschwangau and Neuschwanstein and winds through the countryside from castle to castle until it ends near Lake Starnberg where in 1886, in a mysterious way, the life of King Ludwig II came to an early end. The trail of Ludwig III is only 15 km. long. It leads from Bernau on the Chiemsee to the Seiser Alm via Prien to Wildenwart and the country estate, in which lives Duke Max of Bavaria, the great-grandson of Ludwig III.

But there were not only celebrations in Bavaria. On 12 May, 20,000 enraged citizens gathered at the Marienplatz in Munich for the "Biergarten Revolution." They demonstrated against a ruling that beer gardens stop serving at 9 P.M. and close thirty minutes later. Minister President Edmund Stoiber, who received petitions with 130,000 signatures, promised legislation to protect the beer gardens. And it is Stoiber who is currently standing up for the right of Bavarians to have crucifixes in the classrooms of Bavaria's public schools. Both issues, the right to keep beer gardens open until 11:30 P.M. and to keep displaying the crucifixes in the public schools will strike non-Bavarians as very strange. But beer gardens and crucifixes are as Bavarian as the Alps, milk cows, monasteries and castles.

Ruth M. Reichmann, native Bavarian

FRANKENMUTH, MI ON GERMAN TV

Known as Michigan's Little Bavaria, Frankenmuth, a town of 4,400 is devoted to all things German—from Wurst to Schnitzelbank. On 26 August, over 1,500 German fans descended upon Frankenmuth to witness, in front of the setting of the Bavarian Inn Lodge, the shooting of the 90 minute television program "Lustige Musikanten," planned for a showing on 10 September over ZDF (Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen) in Germany. For this, ZDF spared no expense and flew some of the best known stars and dance groups to Frankenmuth.

Settled in 1845 by 14 young Lutherans from Neuendettelsasu near Nuremberg, Frankenmuth is a perfect setting for old world charm and attracts three million visitors yearly. The Oktoberfest brings approximately 120,000 visitors and there are 10,000 Fraulein-Platten or Sauerbraten, favorites, served on weekends at the Bavarian Inn Lodge and Zehnder's Restaurant. Located in the heartland of the U.S., Frankenmuth has preserved its German heritage, visible in its architecture and celebrated in its customs and traditions.

CHRISTMAS IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

Although it is fall and December seems a long time away, it is time to begin marking your calendar for German holiday related events.

DECEMBER 1-3: OLD WORLD CELEBRATION & ST. NIKOLAUS FEST—The Athenaeum will again host a Christmas Market on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 1-3 December. Market

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hours are 7-9 P.M. each day. The annual St. Nikolaus Fest/Children's Party will be on Sunday from 2-5:30 P.M. in the auditorium. Last year's party featured music, dancing, cookie decorating and gingerbread house making, snowflake ornament making, sand painting, a St. Nikolaus video. The venerable St. Nikolaus and his assistant, the sinister but lovable Knecht Ruprecht have placed Indianapolis on their itinerary for December 3 when they will reward the good and punish the bad. For more information call 317-630-4569.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE IN GERMAN—On Sunday, 10 December, 3 P.M., Zion Evangelical Church of Christ, 416 East North St. in Indianapolis will once again have a service in German with German songs. The church is one block north of the Athenaeum (317-639-5411).

INDIANAPOLIS LIEDERKRANZ CHRISTMAS PARTY—December 9 at 1417 E. Washington St. Phone 317-266-9816 for details.

INDIANAPOLIS SAENGERCHOR CHRISTMAS PARTY—December 16 at 521 East 13th Street. Phone 317-262-9125 for details.

NEW YEAR'S EVE AT GERMAN-AMERICAN KLUB—December 31 at German Park, 8600 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Phone 317-888-6940 for details.

LIEDERKRANZ SILVESTER ABEND—1417 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. Phone 317-266-9816 for details.

REICHMANN'S FAVORITE CHRISTMAS VIDEO

"Alle Jahre wieder" is our most often played video. Children, grandchildren and our friends love it. In the beautiful setting of places such as Koenigsee, Bamberg Cathedral, Nuremberg's Christkindlmarkt, medieval Dinkelsbuehl and Alpine churches, some of Germany's favorite singers and choirs sing the most beautiful German Christmas songs. Yes, it is sung in German, but you do not need to know German to enjoy it. If you think the price of $39.95 is too high, you can rent it from the German Language Video Center, 7625 Pendleton Pike, Indianapolis, IN 46226-5298; telephone 317-547-1257; FAX 317-547-1263. Most people end up buying it.

Eberhard & Ruth Reichmann

Looking for German and German-American Christmas items? Write to D. Blumchen & Co., P.O. Box 1210, Ridgewood, New Jersey 0745-1210 and request their Holiday Catalog "The Best of Christmas Past."

THE TRADITION OF BELSNICKEL

In German-speaking countries, and Holland and Belgium as well, 6 December is St. Nikolaus Day, on which children receive sweets, nuts and other little gifts. The real St. Nikolaus was the fourth century bishop of Myra in Asia Minor, who died on 6 December in the year 343 and was later sainted by the Church. In Germanic celebrations, St. Nikolaus was a distinguished gray-haired man with flowing beard, bishop's raiment and pastoral staff who knocks on doors and asks about the children's behavior.

As with the Christmas tree, St. Nikolaus was brought to the United States by German immigrants in the 1830s and 1840s. They helped weave the legend of Santa Claus, the jolly good fellow created on the basis of Clement Moore's poem, "Twas the Night Before Christmas"and depicted by German-American cartoonist, Thomas Nast. "Der Belsnickel," known to nineteenth-century children as a servant of Nikolaus, carried a switch as he made his rounds to check the behavior of all boys and girls. He would have a large book in which the names of the children were kept. If the children were good, they received some fruits and sweets, but if they were bad, they got a switch! Belsnickel may have aband of "Zwart Piets," or Black Peters, to help distribute his gifts to the visitors. Gells adorned the outfits of all of our nineteenth-century characters.

Old timers in Indiana still remember Belsnickel, the Pelznickel (literally "Fur-Nikolaus") from the Palatinate. His name appears in many variations such as Bells Nickel, Belschnickle, Belsniggles and Belsh Nickle. Not only did the spellings vary, but changes also occurred in his appearance and his antics from one community to another. He made his appearance, dressed in a long coat belted at the waist and a fur cap such as a black bear skin hat, both of which were decorated with bells. The bells would be the sounds the children would hear identifying Belsnickel's approach before he would come into view.

When Belsnickel appeared at the door, he represented a nostalgic reminder to the adults of their childhood days. However, the children viewed him with mixed feelings. Only good children were to receive treats. If a child had been naughty, he could also receive a lump of coal or a stick as a remind to behave in the future. The personality of Belsnickel varied from mischievous to nasty, but most were kind and loving toward the children.

At each house he would visit, Belsnickel received some refreshments such as cider, beer or wine. However, after too many visits and after a long evening, the many refreshments would weaken his judgment and his punishment to the children could be a painful remembrance of his visit. A community sometimes had several Belsnickels roving about, and at times a woman would have to portray this important character. The custom of Belsnickel was quite common until the early 1940s. As the Santa Claus legend and custom developed in America, Thomas Nast's portrayal of Belsnickel took on the features of Santa Claus, who then became the dominant symbol of a secularized Christmas. [Knecht Ruprecht is the Belznickel equivalent at the Athenaeum's Nikolaus Fest.]

INDIANA GERMAN HERITAGE SOC. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

If you wish to join or renew your membership, please enclose your check with this statement. To increase Society support, you may wish to designate a higher category. All contributions are tax deductible.

ANNUAL DUES

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

_____ Student $5.00 ——-Institution: _____

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Oct. 1(Sun) German "Day of Unity" Program for Teachers

Oct. 6 (Fri) German-American Day at City Market, Indianapolis; Oktoberfest. Athenaeum

Oct. 11 (Wed) IGHS Board Meeting, Athenaeum, 1 P.M.

Oct. 11 (Wed) Stammtisch, Beginners & Program, 6 P.M.

Oct. 14 (Sat.) Ethnic Expo, Columbus

Oct. 16 (Mon) German Folk Dancers, Athenaeum, 7 P.M.

Oct. 18 (Wed) Turner Pioneer Banquet

Oct. 19 (Th) Stammtisch, Advanced, Athenaeum, 6 P.M.

Oct. 20-22 (Fri-Sun) International Festival, Fairgrounds, Indianapolis

Oct. 28 (Sat.) Palatines to America Conference, Laughner's Cafeteria, Indianapolis, 9 A.M.

Nov. 3-4 (Fri-Sat) Museums Conference, Max Kade German-American Center

Nov. 4 (Sat) Indiana Historical Society Annual Meeting, Indianapolis

Nov. 8 (Wed) [illegible]d Meeting, Athenaeum, 1 P.M.

Nov. 8 (Wed) Stammtisch, Beginners & Program, Athenaeum, 6 P.M.

Nov. 16 (Th) Stammtisch, Advanced, Athenaeum, 6 P.M.

Nov. 18 (Wed) Anniversary Party? Athenaeum

Nov. 20 (Mon) German Folk Dancers, Athenaeum, 7 P.M.

Dec. 1-3 (Fri-Sun) St. Nikolaus Market, Athenaeum, 7 P.M.

Dec. 3 (Sun) St. Nikolaus Fest, Athenaeum

Dec. 10 (Sun) German Christmas Service, Zion's Church, Indianapolis, 3 P.M.

Dec. 13 (Wed) IGHS Board Meeting, Athenaeum, 1 P.M.

Dec. 13 (Wed) Stammtisch, Beginners & Program, Athenaeum, 6 P.M.

Dec. 21 (Th) Stammtisch, Advanced, Athenaeum, 6 P.M.

INDIANA GERMAN HERITAGE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Indiana German Heritage Society
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Indianapolis, IN 46204

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Is it time to renew your membership? Please check the bottom of your mailing label. It will indicate the month and year your membership exxpires. Renewals notices are not always sent out.

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