

Max Kade Institute Friends Newsletter

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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON, 901 UNIVERSITY BAY DR., MADISON, WI 53705

Milwaukee part of Bach legacy

By Ann Reagan

During the latter half of the nineteenth century Milwaukee was a city of music, graced with the presence of a strong German-American community that supported numerous musical societies and groups. But although Milwaukee was home to many talented performers and conductors, one musician in particular became associated with the city more than any other, spent his entire career there, and was without a doubt the most popular of all its musicians.

Christoph Bach was born in Germany in 1835 and spent his youth preparing to follow in the footsteps of his father, a fresco painter. While few details are known about his early life, it is clear that he began his musical training relatively late, at the age of sixteen. Nevertheless, after his family emigrated to the United States in 1855, he began his career in earnest; by August of that year he made his first public appearance in Milwaukee, performing one of his own compositions with the Milwaukee Musical Society. Soon he organized a sextet, which grew in number over the years, forming the core of the famous "Bach Orchestra."



Photo courtesy of the UW Mills Music Library

Christoph Bach

Liederkrantz to sing Bach at anniversary concert

Who: Milwaukee Liederkrantz

What: 125th anniversary concert featuring C. Bach's music

When: April 26, 2003, 7 p.m.

Where: Mount Mary College, 2900 N. Menomonee River Pkwy., Milwaukee.

Admission: Adults \$10 at the door, \$7.50 in advance. Students \$5 in advance and at the door.

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Freie Gemeinde celebrates 150 years in Sauk City

By Max Gaebler

“As always, when we face problems of identity rather than of technical mastery, we have to carry on an endless dialogue with our past, to relate our hopes to our memories.”

– Prof. Paul Conkin, during a centennial year address of the First Unitarian Society in Madison.

For the Free Congregation (*Freie Gemeinde*) in Sauk City, the issue of identity is even more compelling than it is for most other groups. Immigrants freshly arrived from Germany organized the group in 1852. Those founders were not just a random cross-section of mid-nineteenth century German immigrants to America. They were people who had made the demanding and often perilous trip across the Atlantic for reasons of conscience and conviction. The hope of more promising economic opportunities in America surely played a part in the motivation of some of them. But by far the major factor in their decision to build a new life in a new world was the prospect of a free society, a society offering a religious, educational, and cultural environment free from the shackles of entrenched privilege and authority.



Photo courtesy of Helmut Schmah

The Sauk City congregation held a series of programs in October through November in honor of the *Freie Gemeinde's* sesquicentennial.

There were in the late nineteenth century a substantial number of such congregations founded by German immigrants to America, most of them among the so-called Forty-Eighters who came in the wake of the failure of the German Revolution of 1848. But for a variety of reasons, the principal one being their continuing attachment to the German language, these congregations gradually declined.

Today, the Sauk City Freie Gemeinde is the only surviving congregation from the once-prominent free-thought movement in Wisconsin. In fact, it is the only such congregation in the United States. The Sauk City congregation held a series of programs in October and early November of this year in honor of their anniversary.

I made the acquaintance of this congregation soon after arriving in Madison in 1952, since it has long enjoyed a close friendship with the First Unitarian Society. I have shared in many delightful and stimulating occasions in Park Hall, the meetinghouse of the group. And thirty years ago I had the opportunity to learn a great deal more about the origins of the religious movement this congregation represents. That opportunity arose when I was invited to spend a year

Max Kade Institute

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**Max Kade Institute
for German-American Studies
901 University Bay Drive
Madison, WI 53705**

Ph: (608) 262-7546 Fax: (608) 265-4640

Any submissions via e-mail may be directed to nasaylor@students.wisc.edu.

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World Wide Web at:
<http://csumc.wisc.edu/mki>**

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Kuenzi remembered for his love of music, genealogy, astrology

By Nicole Saylor

MKI remembers former Friends President Ed Kuenzi — a one-man bass section, an enthusiastic genealogist, and a whiz at fixing clocks. He even built his own telescope as a teenager, kept bees, and played violin for decades with the same bunch of friends.

Kuenzi passed away at his home on December 6, 2002. He was 86.

His love for his German heritage led him to head the MKI Friends organization from 1996 to 1999, and serve as vice president the two years prior.

“As the president and a member of the board, Ed Kuenzi not only worked hard for the Friends and for the Institute, but he always did it with humor and in his remarkably low-key way,” said former MKI director Joe Salmons. “Ed will be greatly missed.”

Kuenzi was a native of Watertown, WI, born on February 28, 1916, to Edward and Elvira (Emmerling) Kuenzi. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin–Madison with a degree in civil engineering in 1941 and became a research engineer at the US Forest Products Laboratory, a job he would hold for 33 years. On October 11, 1947, he married Viola A. Andler.

Growing up in Watertown, Kuenzi developed vast interests and innumerable talents.

“The two things I associate with Ed are music and astronomy,” said Max Gaebler, who grew up with Kuenzi in Watertown. “He was a great guy.” Kuenzi helped start an astronomy group in Watertown, of which Gaebler’s father was also a member. Around the same time, Kuenzi built his own telescope and used it until just recently.

He was a long-time member of the Madison Civic Chorus and of his church choir.

“He was a whole bass section unto himself,” said his long-time friend and fellow singer Dr. Henry Peters. In addition, Kuenzi was a talented violinist who



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More books on the way

MKI’s monograph series is planning on releasing two more books in the next few months, an *English / Mennonite Low German Dictionary* by frequent newsletter contributor Jack Thiessen and a collection of essays on the German-Jewish experience in America, published with the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C. Please visit the monograph series portion of our webpage for updates on these books and information on our entire monograph series. Its address is: <http://esumc.wisc.edu/mki/publications/1.PublicationsFrames.htm>

Continued on page 6

Friends profile: Jeanne Schueller

Milwaukee educator makes outreach a focus

By Nicole Saylor

For Jeanne Schueller, being a German scholar is about more than doing research and teaching college classes. It is about making the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee German program part of the larger world.

That is why she hosts a film series each fall for anyone in the community interested in seeing German-language movies on the Big Screen. And that is also why, when she can, she spends time visiting high school classrooms or coordinating the university’s annual German Day through email with high school teachers.

“It’s important for me to build up our program,” said Schueller, who coordinates UWM’s first- and second-year German courses. “I really enjoy what I do. I think outreach is really important.”

One of Schueller’s most recent outreach efforts was becoming a member of the MKI Friends Board of Directors, a role she assumed this fall.

She is an assistant professor in the German program within the Foreign Languages and Linguistics department at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. But her journey to an academic life was not a calculated one.

Schueller, 34, grew up in Coon Valley, a small community outside of La Crosse. Her father’s ancestors immigrated to Wisconsin from Dockweiler, a small town in the Eifel region of Germany near the border with Belgium and Luxemburg. But it was not until high school that Schueller was exposed to the German language. “It was the only language offered at

the time,” she said. “It could have as easily been Spanish.”

She went on to major in German at the University of Minnesota. “I decided to major in it because I enjoyed aspects of the language,” she said. “I was not aiming at becoming a professor.”

While her undergraduate studies focused on German literature and culture, it was not until her graduate work at UW–Madison that she shifted her focus to linguistics. There she became interested in how adults learn a second language, an interest that would guide her toward a teaching life.

Her other interests include taking pictures with the Nikon N60 her father, Mark Schueller, gave her as a wedding gift four years ago. She said she is drawn to the duality that photography offers: “It’s creative and it feels productive at the same time.” She likes taking nature photos, in particular close-ups. “I like to see the details in things.”

To view her photos or find out more about the UWM German Department, log onto Schueller’s web site at <http://www.uwm.edu/~jeannems/>.



Jeanne Schueller

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A brief history of Mennonite Low German

By Jack Thiessen

Plautdietsch, Mennonite Low German, was for hundreds of years a dialect at the very heart of the Prussian-Russian Mennonite experience and culture in a way that High German and later, in North America, English could never be. As an exclusively oral language that did not appear in written form until modern times, Plautdietsch was much more than a means of communication; it was, in fact, a way of life. Analogous to Yiddish, it is a colorful, spirited, and spiritually alert language that is an offshoot of Low German dialects that are many centuries older than Chaucerian English, and like the robust speech of Chaucer's pilgrims expressively rooted in the quotidian lives of ordinary folk. When Mennonites away from home unexpectedly heard their Low German being spoken, their response was apt to be: "Soo wiet von Tus, enn doch soo tusijch" (So far from home and yet so homey). In a strange or even hostile setting, just hearing their mother tongue spoken was usually enough to lift the spirits of Mennonites to a common accord and comfort level. And that remains true today for those Mennonites who still understand Mennonite Low German.

Originally, the majority of Anabaptist Mennonites, the Doopsgezinde, came from the Netherlands at a time in the sixteenth century when religious and social upheaval was the order of the day. Martin Luther had already probed and rejected papal claims and authority, and Menno Simons, a Frisian priest, soon followed him and became the leader of the Anabaptists, who adopted his name. United in their resolve to worship God directly through Christ and his grace, the Anabaptists were persecuted and forced to flee to the Vistula Delta later in the century. There they retained their native Dutch as a church language for a while, but adapted the region's prevalent Lower West Prussian dialect (among many others) into what became their own dialect of Plautdietsch. It became the internal

verbal expression of their isolation from the rest of the world. It was their *Ausgleichsprache*, their compromise language, that ensured *Gemeinschaft*, community-mindedness, to go along with the unity of purpose demanded by their radical Anabaptist faith. In fact, over the centuries Plautdietsch ensured a more stable base for Mennonite culture and society than Anabaptism, which periodically occasioned spiritual restlessness leading to congregational upheavals and divisions.

Sadly, that rich Mennonite mother tongue is now threatened with decline through neglect, at least in North America. Urbanization and the accessibility of the mass media have leveled and exposed the hidden valleys of linguistic retreat. Mennonites, like other ethnic groups, have joined the mainstream of society and become ever more pragmatic and materialis-

tically minded in their search—largely urbanized nowadays—for success and prosperity. With the mainstream shift to English, Plautdietsch, the linguistic soul of Mennonitism, is a language used less and less in Canada and the United States, although it still flourishes in the Mennonite colonies of Mexico and South America. However, since human ways are never entirely predictable, one can only hope that Plautdietsch will at least be retained in North America as a literary language for the foreseeable future, and that the familiar "Soo wiet von Tus, enn doch soo tusijch" may still be heard as expressing the essence of Mennonite *Gemeinschaft* and ethnic and linguistic durability.

Jack Thiessen, retired professor of German at the University of Winnipeg, is well known for his Low German short stories, which have appeared in the Mennonite Mirror and in Rhubarb. He has also taught at the Universities of New Brunswick, Kiel, Strasbourg, and Jena.

With the mainstream switch to English, Plautdietsch, the linguistic soul of Mennonitism, is a language used less and less in Canada and the US.

Jewish women in Upper Midwest exhibit opens

The Wisconsin Historical Museum in Madison is hosting the traveling exhibit “Unpacking on the Prairie: Jewish Women in the Upper Midwest” from December 16 to March 1, 2003.

The exhibit explores the experiences of immigrant Jewish women and how they interacted with their neighbors, maintained Jewish homes, and created Jewish communities in a region with relatively few Jews.

The exhibit is divided into three broad sections. The first is Packing Up and Unpacking, which focuses on women’s experiences in Europe and their adjustment to new settings and new neighbors in the Upper Midwest. The second, Women in the Jewish Home, explores women’s roles in maintaining and transforming domestic religious culture in the Upper Midwest and women as the keepers of family memories and mementos. The third section, Women in the Community, focuses on women’s experiences and changing roles in the workplace, the synagogue, and in voluntary organizations of the region.

“Unpacking on the Prairie” will be open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Admission to the museum is free, but there is a suggested donation of \$4 for adults, \$3 for children under 18, and \$10 for families. For more information, call 264-6555.

The museum is at 30 N. Carroll Street on the Capitol Square. The Minnesota Historical Society and the Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest organized the exhibit. Locally, exhibit programming is in collaboration with Madison Public Library, Hadassah, and the Jewish Women’s Network.

Kuenzi from page 3

played regularly with a quartet. “They would get into some pretty heavy stuff. They probably did that 20 or more years.”

It was Kuenzi’s engineering skills that enhanced his ability to fix clocks.

“(Ed) could take a complicated clock apart and put it back together again without even looking at it,”



Photos courtesy of the Jewish Historical Society

North Dakota homesteader Bessie Schwartz, left, and several members of her family outside their sod hut.



B’nai Israel Congregation women’s auxiliary prepares to serve Sabbath dinner, Sioux Falls, SD, about 1950.

said Peters. “He learned it from his father. I don’t know how many clocks in town are put back together by him. If it needed a new part, he could make it.”

Kuenzi is survived by his wife, two sons, and several grandchildren and great grandchildren. Preceding him in death was his twin sister, Margaret, who died in 1991.

“He had a lot of get-up-and-go,” said Peters. “He was great guy. He had all the features of a great person.”

MKI explores 'cultural play' in Wisconsin

By Mark Loudon, MKI Director

It's hard to believe that the holiday season is already upon us and that the fall semester is rapidly drawing to a close. I am happy to report that this has been a very productive time for both the Max Kade Institute and Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures. On the research front, two new publications have now appeared, *Land without Nightingales*, edited by Philip V. Bohlman and Otto Holzapfel, and *Pickled Herring and Pumpkin Pie* by Henriette Davidis, with an introduction by our longtime MKI friend, Lou Pitschmann. (See full story, Page 3.) Early sales information is positive so far, and we hope that especially the Davidis cookbook will be a strong seller during the holiday season (I've already decided that it will be going to several on my Christmas list this year!). Several other publications are currently in the editorial pipeline and should be appearing over the course of the coming year, keeping our tireless project assistants, Eric Platt and Emily Engel, quite busy!

We've been no less busy in the area of outreach this fall. Ruth Olson, Antje Petty, and I have hit the road several times for individual and joint presentations to a number of community groups. One recent event that all three of us participated in was a daylong affair at the Neville Museum in Green Bay. Every year, local schoolchildren through eighth grade come to the museum for UW On The Road, a series of 20-30-

minute interactive presentations by UW-Madison departments and centers sponsored by the Wisconsin Alumni Association. The theme for the joint MKI/CSUMC presentation this year (the only one in the humanities) was "Cultural Play," a look at how we become acculturated through toys and games. We chose examples from several ethnic groups represented in Wisconsin's past and present, including Oneida Indians, Germans, Hmong, and Amish. We wrapped up by playing a question-and-answer game with the kids drawing on their knowledge of culture, including games, sayings, and languages they speak. Of the 200-plus children we worked with (divided into ten groups), the cultural and language groups represented included African-Americans, Chinese, French, Germans, Hmong, Lao, Mexican-Americans, Oneidas, and Russians. This microcosm of diversity aptly reflected our ongoing mission to document and promote understanding of the varied cultural landscape of our great state.

Let me close by expressing my sincere thanks to all the Friends for their sterling support over the past year. That support is what keeps us going, something for which all of us on the MKI staff are deeply grateful. Have a healthy and very happy holiday season!

Online exhibit explores bread-making, German music

By Cherie Wolter

Two new virtual exhibits are now available at the Max Kade Institute's web site <http://csumc.wisc.edu/mki>. "German-American Music in Wisconsin" and "Breaking Bread, Bridging Cultures" are exhibits that were presented as part of conferences at the Max Kade Institute and the Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures.

"German-American Music in Wisconsin," which was created by Geraldine Laudati, director of the Mills Music Library, and Steven Sundell, curator of the

Wisconsin Music Archives, features descriptive text and images of several important German-American composers, music publishers, bands, festivals, and recordings.

"Breaking Bread, Bridging Cultures," originally presented by Antje Petty and Ruth Olson, describes German-American and other breads that are a part of Wisconsin's ethnic heritage. Colorful images of bakers, bakeries, and bread, as well as descriptions of traditional uses for bread, are included.

Collection feature: Advice books

By Kevin Kurdylo, MKI Librarian

Self-help books are not a recent phenomenon. As long as independence and self-reliance have been American virtues, there have been pragmatic guides available in this country—just think of *Poor Richard's Almanac*. Advice books were also published in the German language in America, with several aimed at helping German-speaking immigrants adjust to their new homeland. As seen in the last issue of the *Newsletter*, a German settler could refer to *Der deutsche Farmer* for comprehensive advice on all aspects of running a successful agricultural enterprise. Other books addressed such practical subjects as diet, cooking, dress, table manners and behavior in public, moral conduct, relationships with the opposite sex, child-rearing, business and law, and health and medicine. In this collection feature, we'll highlight a few books directed to new immigrants. Look for health and medicine books in the next issue!

Amerikanischer Dolmetscher. Ein unfehlbarer Rathgeber für Einwanderer und Eingewanderte. Winona, Minn.: National Weeklies, 1901. 365 pp.

Der große amerikanische Dolmetscher, mit einem vollständigen Handwörterbuch der englischen und deutschen Sprache, nebst richtiger und sprachgerechter Aussprache der englischen Wörter. Ein Hülfsbuch zur Erlernung der englischen Sprache ohne Lehrer, besonders geeignet für deutsche Einwanderer... New York: Wilhelm Radde, 1873. 288 pp.

Aiming to help the German-speaking immigrant learn the English language without the help of a teacher, these two guidebooks include basic grammar and a guide to pronunciation. Words are given in German and then English, with a phonetic aid to pronouncing the English words. For example, *der Abend*, “evening” in English, to be pronounced “ihw’ning” by speakers of



German. Lists of everyday words are followed by essential phrases, as well as examples of important letters and business forms in both languages, and then an English-German/German-English dictionary. The 1901 volume also includes a guide to writing English longhand, forms of address, the states and their capitals, postal rates, and information on “wie man Bürger dieses Landes werden kann” (how to become a citizen of this country).

Bogen, F. W. *The German Immigrant in America: F. W. Bogen's Guidebook.* Edited by Don

Heinrich Tolzmann. Bowie, Md.: Heritage Books, 1992. 101 pp.

A reprint of the 1851 publication *The German in America, or Advice and Instruction for German Emigrants in the United States of America*, which originally appeared in both German *Fraktur* and English. Among other advice, Bogen lists eleven recommendations to help the immigrant avoid “falling into the hands of some swindler and of becoming the dupe of his own confidence and ignorance.” While Bogen urges immigrants to learn the English language, he “by no means asks his countryman to renounce entirely his mother tongue, which is in reality one of the most powerful, rich and refined in the world...”

Buel, Elizabeth C. Barney, comp. *Taschenbuch über die Vereinigten Staaten für Einwanderer und Ausländer.* [Washington, D.C.]: National-Gesellschaft der Töchter der Amerikanischen Revolution, 1924. 101 pp., ill.

Prepared by the Daughters of the American Revolution and translated into German, this book includes information on how to become a citizen of the United States, a short history of America, and a discourse on its government, rules for the use of the

Visiting scholar ends her Low German research

Dat hew ick nie nich dacht!

By Alexandra Jacob

My stay at the Max Kade Institute as a visiting scholar and my Low German research project in Wisconsin have finally come to an end. I came to Madison in January 2002 as a recipient of a DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) scholarship from the University of Bielefeld in Westphalia, Germany. When I began my research in Wisconsin, I was hoping initially to find some Westphalian Low German

speakers, but after a while I realized that I would not be able to find people who could still speak this variety of *Plattdütsch*.

On the advice of Prof. Joachim (Yogi) Reppmann, co-founder of the American/Schleswig-Holstein Heritage Society and professor at St. Olaf and Carleton Colleges, Northfield, Minnesota, I shifted my focus to the Pomeranian Low



Jacob

German speakers of Wisconsin. In May I met Don and Lou Ann Zamzow from the Pomeranian club *Pommerscher Verein Central Wisconsin* at the annual Max Kade Friends banquet, and then my research project really got underway. I visited the Wausau area several times, and was the speaker at the Pomeranian club's *Piknik im Bush* in July and at the annual club meeting at Rib River Ballroom in October. I also co-hosted the *Pommern Life* radio show on Big WRIG 1390 Wausau (Fridays from 12:30 to 1 p.m. after the Polka program) four times with Bob Gruling and Don Zamzow.

The main part of my research was the documentation of *Pommersches Platt*. I conducted and recorded 89 interviews (approx. 45-60 mins. each) with Pomeranian Low German speakers, mostly from Marathon and Lincoln Counties. I was amazed to find so many fluent speakers! The *Pommerscher Verein* is very much interested in preserving its German heritage and Low German language. Through the club's newsletter *Dat Pommersche Blatt*, I learned a lot about the group's activities. The club has more than 380 members from all over the world and is still growing! It



Visiting scholar Alexandra Jacob interviews Platt speaker Bill Storm.

has been very supportive of my research.

My series of interviews with Low German speakers will be digitized on CD at the University of Bielefeld in January 2003. The recordings will be the basis for my doctoral thesis, which will focus on the influence of American English on Wisconsin Pomeranian Low German.

In addition to the speech recordings, I collected data on the nineteenth-century history of immigration from Pomerania to Wisconsin, photocopied a number of Pomeranian family histories, scanned old photos and official and personal documents (including passports, certificates of naturalization, baptismal and marriage certificates, land deeds, etc.), and spent hours and hours in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and the Historical Society of Marathon County to copy information on the early settlers and life in nineteenth-century Wisconsin.

On December 10, I flew home to Germany. After the Christmas break I will start analyzing my data and will go on with my work on Wisconsin Pomeranian Low German.

I am very grateful to those who have supported my research and would like to thank everyone who helped me and made my stay in Wisconsin a successful one. When I came to Madison in January 2002 I really did not expect to find so many excellent Low German speakers in Wisconsin. Thanks again for all your support!

Highlights of recent library acquisitions

By Kevin Kurdylo, MKI Librarian

Once again we highlight a small number of the many donations added to the MKI Library over the past few months, selected from the Published in the United States, Subject, and Family History and Archives collections. A complete list of recent acquisitions will be available on our Web site as a link from the News page or at the URL: <http://csumc.wisc.edu/mki/Library/NewAcqs/NewAcqs.htm>. Contact the MKI Librarian at (608) 262-7546 or by e-mail at kkurdylo@facstaff.wisc.edu if you are interested in viewing any of these titles, or if you would like to donate materials to the Max Kade Institute. We would like to express our gratitude to Max Gaebler, Jim and Lydia Groetsch, Gary (Gerhardt) and Betty Hillmer, Alexandra Jacob, Madeline Kanner, Joan Meier, Helmut Schmahl, Jack Thiessen, Alice Wendt, and Daniel J. Zehren for their recent donations.

Published in the United States

Tisch und Küche. Eine Zusammenstellung von bewährten Koch-Rezepten. Sorgfältig ausgewählt für den Familiengebrauch und angeordnet für rasches Nachschlagen. Ergänzt durch kurze Winke für Tisch und Küche. Chicago, Ill.: Price Baking Powder Co., [1893]. 61 pp.

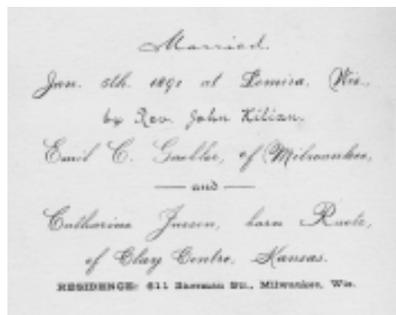
A German-language edition of a cookbook published by the Price Baking Powder Company of Chicago, the English title is *Table and Kitchen. A Compilation of Approved Cooking Receipts Carefully Selected for the Use of Families and Arranged for Ready Reference. Supplementd by Brief Hints for the Table and Kitchen.* The book provides recipes for such foods as bread, biscuits, and breakfast rolls; muffins and gems (*Formgebäck*); eggs; soups; fish, meat and poultry; vegetables; salad dressings and fish and meat sauces; pickles and catsups; frozen desserts; puddings; pies and cakes;

and candies. There is even a brief section on nourishment for sick people, and a report on the dangers of ammonia and alum in baking powders, with certifications that “Dr. Price’s Cream Backpulver” is free of such impurities. As a bit of trivia, I discovered that the Price Baking Co. was founded by the grandfather of actor—and gourmet cook—Vincent Price!

Subject Collection

Butts, Porter. *Der Rathskeller + der Stiftskeller, 1928–1978.* Reprint. [Madison, Wis.]: Wisconsin Union, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1982. 24 pp., ill.

A history of the University of Wisconsin–Madison’s Rathskeller—a gathering place for students that is reminiscent of the cellar of a German Rathaus, or town hall—and the Stiftskeller, or “cellar of the founders.” Both rooms are decorated with murals that have legends in German; those in the Rathskeller were painted by Eugene Hausler, and those in the Stiftskeller were executed by Kurt Schaldach. Provides the meanings of the murals and their legends.



Marriage announcement taken from a collection of letters donated by Max Gaebler.

Jacob, Alexandra. *Niederdeutsch im Mittleren Westen der USA: Auswanderungsgeschichte — Sprache — Assimilation.* Westfälische Beiträge zur niederdeutschen Philologie, Bd. 10. Jürgen Macha, Robert Peters, and Jan Wirrer, eds. Bielefeld: Verlag für Regionalgeschichte, 2002. 147 pp.

Based upon MKI visiting scholar Alexandra Jacob’s dissertation, this work examines the initial transplantation and the now-threatened existence of the Low German dialect in Illinois and Missouri. While Jacob’s area of interest is primarily linguistics, she provides a detailed look at the background and reasons for the emigration of speakers of Low German.

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MKI

News in brief

National Max Kade leaders want high school alliances

MKI Director Mark Loudon attended a two-day Max Kade Foundation conference in New York where representatives from several affiliated institutes and exchange programs talked about the teaching of German in the United States and the future of German-American studies.

A key challenge that arose from the conference, October 10-11, was the need to uncover reasons why the number of high school students studying German drops when they enter college.

There has been a noticeable decline in the study of German over the last ten years, both at the high school and university levels. In 1990, 133,000 undergraduates and graduates students were studying German; by 1998 that figure had dropped to 89,000, according to the Max Kade Foundation in New York.

One proposal made at the conference was to establish more systematic, cooperative “alliances” between pre-college and undergraduate German language programs, perhaps using the network of Max Kade centers and affiliated institutions throughout the United States.

Another idea to address the decline in undergraduate German language study was “academic entrepreneurialism,” combining German study along with other disciplines in which Germans have traditionally excelled, including engineering, science and

Collection Feature from page 8

American flag, and translations of the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Practical advice for immigrants covers preparing for the trip, where to go when a family member falls ill, what to do if you have a job-related accident, and what expectations or laws apply to such things as signing documents, hunting and fishing, operating automobiles, and getting married. In addition to urging immigrants to learn English (after all,

Events Calendar

Wisconsin State Genealogical Society (South-Central Chapter) **Genealogy Fair**, January 11, 2003, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 326 South Segoe Road, Madison.



Lecture by NPR classical music correspondent **Martin Goldsmith** on his new book, *The Inextinguishable Symphony: A True Story of Music and Love in Nazi Germany*, to be presented in the Pyle Conference Center auditorium at 7 p.m. on Saturday, February 22, 2003. Contact Mark Loudon at mllouden@wisc.edu for more information.

technology, and alternative medicine. The plan would involve not only a semester of study in Germany, but also a semester-long internship with a German company.

Discussions also focused on how to get more American students interested in exchange programs with Germany. Conference participants underscored the need to think of international exchange in a broader perspective than just university-based study abroad.

“Englisch ist eine schöne Sprache”) and mentioning various methods for doing so, there is advice on the care of one’s living quarters: “Halte Deine Zimmer in einem reinen und ordentlichen Zustand. Laß immer frische Luft herein. Schlafe immer bei offenem Fenster.” (Keep your rooms clean and orderly. Always let in fresh air. Sleep next to an open window.)

Liederkrantz celebrates heritage with concert

The Milwaukee Liederkrantz was founded on January 21, 1878, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Milwaukee Liederkrantz is a male chorus that sings a wide repertoire of songs from German *Lieder* to German drinking songs. It has given public concerts every year since its founding, even during the first and second world wars. In addition to performing at its own events, the Liederkrantz also performs with other German choruses at periodic statewide *Sängerfests*, or songfests, at national *Sängerfests* and at Milwaukee's Germanfest. The Liederkrantz also toured in Europe on a number of occasions, with the last tour in 1953.

The chorus has had many talented directors. Its first director was Christoph Bach (see an accompanying article, Page 1), who directed it from 1878 to 1884 and again from 1900 to 1908. Its third director was Hugo Kaun who was a well-known composer both in American and Germany. Its current director is Tim Wurgler who is a Swiss-American and a native of New Glarus, Wisconsin.

Over the years the membership of the Liederkrantz has varied. The numbers were high when there were large numbers of German

immigrants in Milwaukee, before WWI and after WWII. The membership declined during the wars. There were 135 active singers in 1932. Today the choir has 36 active singers. The singers are increasingly American-born so meetings are held in English. But they continue to sing mostly in German. The chorus has won the singing competition of the Wisconsin German-American choruses eight times since 1976.

At 7 p.m. on April 26, 2003, the Milwaukee Liederkrantz will perform a concert at Mount Mary College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in honor of its 125th anniversary. As part of this concert, the Liederkrantz will perform songs by some of its past directors, including Hugo Kaun and Christoph Bach. In addition to performances by the Milwaukee Liederkrantz, the concert will also feature the performance by Milwaukee musicians of additional pieces by Christoph Bach.

Further information can be obtained at the Milwaukee Liederkrantz web site <http://members.aol.com/bgclubnews/liederk2.htm>, by e-mailing Ed Langer at edlanger@execpc.com, or writing him at 11430 West Woodside Drive, Hales Corners, WI 53130-1143 or by calling him at (414) 529-4822. – Ed Langer

Bach from page 1

By 1864, Christoph Bach and his orchestra began the regular Sunday concerts that would entertain Milwaukee for decades to come. Their regular season was from September to May, and during the summer months, they sometimes participated in outdoor events. In addition, the orchestra often appeared with vocal societies, providing accompaniment for operas, oratorios, and the like.

Christoph Bach's mission was twofold: to educate and to entertain. Programs often were lengthy and eclectic, including some of the most modern music from Germany as well as favorites from the time of Mozart. It was not uncommon to attend a concert featuring compositions by both Richard Wagner and John Philip Sousa, or a symphony by Beethoven

alongside songs by Victor Herbert, and maybe even Christoph Bach's own works. So it was that for his thirty-seventh birthday, a group of citizens honored him with an gold-tipped ebony baton, inlaid with gems and engraved with the names of its donors.

His popularity did not wane in later years, especially since he spent little time traveling or performing far from home. He participated in rallies and parades, and was careful to appeal to a large audience, much like those attending the Boston Pops concerts today.

As a composer, Christoph Bach was equally versatile. Among his compositions are full-scale operas, *Lieder*, vocal compositions, piano pieces, and marches, to name a few. Although not well known

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Bach from page 12

today, many were published during his lifetime, and are available in Wisconsin archives as well as in the Library of Congress. Bach was known for his ardent dislike of jazz, and other types of “modern” music. His own works tend to be conservative, and in some cases are reminiscent of Johann Strauss the Younger.

Unlike some of his peers, Bach was not given to regular press interviews, and avoided controversy. However, when threatened with the impending establishment of a rival orchestra, he made it clear that he regarded his group as not simply important, but the *only* orchestra in Milwaukee. In his own words to the *Milwaukee Sentinel*:

...As is well-known I have built up, and maintained and managed the only standing orchestra which this city has had the last twenty-five years. My organization was, and is so far, the only one in the city which can and does give regular symphony concerts...have also maintained my orchestra...during all these years without demanding or receiving any kind of guarantee fund...

The new group never materialized, partly because Bach’s musicians remained loyal to him and did not defect.

In 1906, Milwaukee celebrated half a century of Christoph Bach’s talents. In his address Mayor David S. Rose stated “...no man has ever done more for the city of Milwaukee than Mr. Bach and his orchestra.” Honors and accolades continued even after his retirement from the podium, as on the occasion of his eightieth birthday. Christoph Bach continued composing until his death in 1927.

Milwaukee honored him once more on the hundredth anniversary of his birth, with Mayor Daniel W. Hoan declaring “Christoph Bach Day.” Mayor Hoan’s words summarize the remarkable life and enduring contributions of Christoph Bach:

WHEREAS, this year marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Christoph Bach, who played an important part in the development of our city as a music center, and distinguished himself as composer, musician and orchestra director;

WHEREAS, the Bach orchestra was a chief factor in the cultural life of Milwaukee, serving as the main support of all larger musical presenta-



Photo courtesy of the UW Mills Music Library

Christoph Bach pieces were regularly performed and frequently published in Milwaukee.

tions in this city;

WHEREAS, the Milwaukee Musician will honor the memory of Christoph Bach by observing the anniversary of his birth with appropriate festivities...;

THEREFORE, I...do hereby declare Sunday, March 31st, Christoph Bach Day and urge the music-loving public of Milwaukee to express their appreciation of the life and work of Christoph Bach...

Clearly Bach’s influence and his contributions were unmatched, helping Milwaukee to attain its status as the city of music, the *Deutsch-Athen*.

Ann Reagan is Professor of Music History at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo.

See page 4 for a related article on MKI’s virtual exhibit that highlights German music in Wisconsin.

Freie Gemeinde continued from page 2

working as an exchange minister with the Free Religious Congregations in the German state of Baden, Württemberg.

The year in which the Sauk City congregation was organized—1852—was only four years after the eruption of violence across Central Europe, violence that marked the end of the soaring hopes kindled by the Frankfurt parliament at which dreams of a unified Germany had merged with profound commitment to political, intellectual, and religious freedom. The revolutionary turmoil, which accompanied the Frankfurt parliament, began in a mood of euphoria but ended in disaster. The liberals who dominated that parliament proved to be such dogmatic individualists that they could not reach significant agreement on anything. As their momentum flagged, the old authoritarian forces—princes, established churches, and the military—moved to reassert themselves decisively. At the end there were scattered efforts at armed revolt, but these were quickly and ruthlessly put down. When unification came to Germany two decades later, it was under the paternalistic leadership of Chancellor Bismarck.

This brief euphoric and ultimately tragic interlude of democracy had its religious side. Indeed, developments on the religious scene were so dramatic as to have earned the failed revolution the sobriquet of Germany's Second Reformation. It came complete with its nineteenth-century Tetzl and its nineteenth-century Luther. Tetzl was the great salesman of papal indulgences in the sixteenth century. He went about promising that at the very moment a coin clinked in the collection box, the soul for whom the indulgence was purchased would be freed from purgatory. It was outrage at these tactics that drove Martin Luther to post his famous ninety-five theses against indulgences on the door of the church in Wittenberg. And it was that act of defiance that launched the Reformation.

In 1844 it was Bishop Arnoldi who played the part of Tetzl. In that year he placed on display in the cathedral at Trier the garment that was alleged to be the Holy Cloak, the seamless robe of Christ. Arnoldi promised blessing and health to all who made pilgrimages to Trier to touch the Holy Cloak and who in return placed their sacrificial gift on the altar of God. These crass appeals produced astonishing effect.

People by the tens of thousands began streaming toward Trier. All roads leading into the city were clogged with pilgrims, and within six months a million people had visited the cathedral to touch the Holy Cloak, and all manner of miraculous cures were widely reported.

Finally, the nineteenth-century Luther appeared, an unknown Catholic priest from Silesia named Johannes Ronge. He wrote an open letter to Arnoldi protesting the exploitation of the piety of simple people. "Do you know," he wrote, "—as a Bishop you must know it—that the founder of the Christian religion did not leave to his disciples his cloak but his spirit?" He went on to address his colleagues in the priesthood: "Be silent no longer, for you are guilty of a sin against religion, against your people, against your calling as a priest if you remain silent, if you hesitate any longer to make known your true persuasion. . . . Demonstrate that you have inherited his spirit, not his cloak!"

The letter appeared in a widely circulated liberal newspaper and spread quickly across Germany. Ronge was chastised by his ecclesiastical superiors, and later excommunicated. But by this time he had founded a new congregation in Breslau, the Universal Catholic congregation he called it, where he rejected outright the worship of saints, the adoration of relics, and the rule of celibacy for the clergy. Ronge's success was immediate and great. New so-called German Catholic congregations sprang up in every part of the country.

However, the religious movement he founded suffered greatly from the reaction that followed the petering out of the revolution. In 1859, the congregations combined with another group called the Friends of Light, which originated in the 1840s but within the Protestant churches. The combined groups were called Free Religious Congregations, the name they bear to this day.

The combination of religious, political, and intellectual idealism that found expression in these events is represented dramatically in the career of Eduard Schroeter, for three decades speaker of the Sauk City congregation. A student radical in the 1830s, Schroeter, by then a candidate for the Protestant ministry in Germany, joined the new German Catholic movement founded by Ronge.

Aquisitions from page 10

Zersen, Katherina Maria Sophia (Kirchhoff).
“A Pioneer Pastor’s Wife, 1903–1907.”

Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, vol. 62, no. 2, Summer 1991, pp. 53–67, ill.

Transcription of tapes made in the mid-1960s.
“The tapes contain a vivid and fascinating account of the life of a missionary’s wife on the North Dakota prairie in the early years of the twentieth century. Mrs. Zersen’s primary language was German, then the language of most of the Lutherans in the area of North Dakota”

Family Histories and Archives

[*Documents relating to the von Puttkammer family*].

Assorted photocopied family papers: Family crest; map showing where Puttkamers lived in Pomerania; four photographs showing Heinrich von Puttkamer in Germany and in the US, as well as an image of Fanny (Francesca) von Puttkamer in Milwaukee; a Danish ship passage receipt for Heinrich von Puttkamer; an Army certificate for Heinrich von Puttkamer for a suitcase repair; US Army discharge papers for Heinrich (Henry) von Puttkamer (served 1889–1893); a marriage certificate for Heinrich von Puttkamer and

Francesca (Fanny) Metz, 1893; and two post-cards from relatives still in Pomerania. Donated by Mrs. Joan Meier.

[*Documents relating to the Westphal family*].

Assorted photocopied family papers: passport for Friedrich Westphal and Albertine (Berta) Budtke from the Königlich Preussische Staaten, Provinze Pommern (1851); biographies (in German) for Friedrich and Berta; small pox vaccination paper for Berta; photo of Hulda Westphal, daughter of Friedrich and Berta; wedding invitation for Hulda; four letters; and a poem for a new baby written by Louise Newin, née Bayer. Donated by Mrs. Joan Meier.

[*Hand-bound book of letters*].

Hand-written letters in the old German script between Catharine Juessen (née Ruetz), an aunt of Carl Schurz, living in Clay Centre, Kansas, and Emil C. Gaebler, living in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and later in Chicago. The letters date from Jan. 25, 1889 to Oct. 14, 1890, with the final pages showing a visiting announcement from a newspaper, a marriage announcement for Emil C. Gaebler and Catharine Jussen, and a poem entitled “Spätherbstblüthe.” Donated by Max Gaebler.

Freie Gemeinde from page 14

As leader of the congregation in the ancient city of Worms, he made himself sufficiently unpopular with the authorities that he was banished by the government of Hesse. After a farewell to his congregation, he left Worms on May 25, 1850, and came to the United States. Eduard Schroeter, however, was not the only one among the members of the Congregation who shared this tradition.

I speak of these connections between the German origins of the Free Religious movement and the congregation in Sauk City in celebration of a great milestone in the church’s history. For in that story there are values and commitments that transcend the cultural particularity of the group. The Sauk City congregation gave up the German language in 1937, one major

reason why it survives today. And just fifty years ago, in 1952, the congregation joined the American Unitarian Association. It was with a view to the future that leaders decided on this secondary association to ensure a wider context within which the congregation might establish its own unique and special place. I dare say that without those two changes this congregation would not be here celebrating its 150th anniversary. But with change we have also preserved a unique and important heritage. And embedded in that heritage are values we forget at our own great peril.

Max Gaebler is Minister Emeritus of the First Unitarian Society of Madison, where he served for 35 years.

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