

Max Kade Institute

FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE MAX KADE INSTITUTE. VOL. 8 NO 1 . SPRING 1999

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Jesse Shull: Pennsylvania German Folkhero in the old Northwest Territory

by Dennis Boyer

"Wisconsin's Sesquicentennial in 1998 set off my search for early Pennsylvania German contributions to the Badger State history. [. . .] An Old Man Keim supposedly ranged through Wisconsin with his band of Indian scouts in the late 1700s. [. . .] There was even rumor of a Deitsch lullaby passed down by women captives of the French and Indian War to descendants on the Stockbridge-Munsee Reservation. [. . .]

Tale after tale brought me back to one Jesse Shull. It soon became apparent that he was one of the earliest, if not the earliest, permanent American settlers in what is now Wisconsin. Shull was a real life historical figure who played a large role in the transition of southwest Wisconsin from fur trade hub to lead mining center. [. . .] " Dennis Boyer

Jesse Shull must be credited as the forerunner of all things German in Wisconsin, be they Alsatian, Schweizer, Rheinländer, or Hessian. Quite an achievement for a quarter-Indian, Dutch backwoods boy.

Shull came out of those Pennsylvania Scholls at the headwaters of the Ohio River. Scrapy Dutch who had tangled in the frontier fighting in the French and Indian War and the Revolution. Practical, hardheaded Dutch like his grandfather who lost his first wife in the French and Indian War and promptly remarried a French/Shawnee woman.

Jesse grew up speaking Deitsch, French, Delaware, Shawnee and a bit of English. Indians often visited the family homestead. Travelers also brought colorful stories of the West to the Scholl's log house.

One such buckskin pilgrim told a wide-eyed young Jesse of a grand expedition led by a couple of fellows named Lewis and Clark. The lure of such adventure prompted the boy to build a raft and head down the Ohio to the Mississippi and on to St. Louis.

There young Jesse, rechristened Shull by semi-literate Kentuckians, hooked up with an old Schwarzwälder by the name of Reinert. It was a good match. The old man took Jesse on trapping and fur buying trips up the Missouri River and to the Big Horn Mountains and the Yellowstone country.

He was quite a mountain man when he arrived back in St. Louis a few years later. Still a boy in years, he was tough

enough to be mustered into the Missouri territorial militia for the War of 1812. That band of ruffians and roughnecks rounded out Jesse's school of hard knocks education.

He came up the river with the Missouri rabble on their clumsy flatboats. He laid low during their whiskey drinking and shooting at shadows. He finally convinced their colonel that he would be of more service away from the mob. So he was placed with the scouting group, a ragtag squad of Mohicans, Narragansetts, and Shawnee.

He scouted the country from Rock Island to Chicago and Milwaukee, visiting the sites of those future cities when they were not much more than Pottawatomie fishing villages with a few traders' huts. He learned of the massive lake country to the north with its large bands of Chippewa and Menominee and Winnebago.

When he rejoined the militia at Prairie du Chien, he told the colonel that there were thousands, if not tens of thousands, of American-hating Indians to the north and west for the British to recruit. He told the tale of American treaty-breaking, liquor sales, and harassment.

Jesse was soon proven to be correct as the British brought a large Indian force to encircle the Americans. He had ample opportunity to review the lessons of

U.S. blunders in Indian policy with his fellow prisoners of war in the Prairie du Chien stockade. He fell into a small but dedicated group of backwoodsmen who wanted peaceful relations with the tribes.

Soon as Jesse was sprung and free of militia obligations he thought he would try to find his own place to build up a frontier business. He had heard about the lead region in southwest Wisconsin and how the Indians there had furs and lead to trade. The Hudson Bay Company was looking for sharp young men like him and quickly signed him on as their representative for the lead district.

He first set up a trading post in northwest Illinois and got to know just about all the Sac and Fox leaders, including fierce old Black Hawk. He and the old warrior exchanged laughing stories about foolish incidents in the recent war. But he sadly shook his head when the noble Sac refused to believe that there were millions of whites advancing as homesteaders toward the West.

Jesse concluded that he had to move further up into the lead district to get away from these homesteaders. A trading post in an area undergoing settlement provided too many opportunities for friction between pioneers and Indians. So he moved up to present day Shullsburg and build a fort, a trading post, a tavern, and a house.

This is where the matter of Shull "firsts" comes to the fore. His was the first tavern to endure more than a year or two. As far as we know, he brewed the first beer in Wisconsin. And in 1819 he brought the first shipment of *sauerkraut* into Wisconsin—fifty barrels all the way up from St. Louis!

Soon he was producing the first Wisconsin sausage. They say his slogan for this product was "for besser or wurst". And it was not a sausage recognizable to German palates. It was in natural casings to be sure, but of varying mammal species beyond acceptance by today's consumers. Let's face it, skunk guts cause gagging by mere mention.

The sausage was beyond its Teutonic roots in one other significant respect: it bore more resemblance in mixture to the Indians' pemmican, what with a variety of nuts and dried berries thrown in with the meat. The blend reflected his bloodlines and his domestic arrangement; his Winnebago wife insisted that the fruits of prairie and forest go into the concoction.

Jesse's business grew and he settled into a prosperous existence as trader, innkeeper, and lead merchant. His advice was sought out by German-speaking pioneers from the eastern states and from Europe. Orphaned boys and runaways came to work for him.

He sent these Pennsylvania German youngsters—be they from the Keystone State or Ohio Buckeyes or Indiana Hoosiers—out onto the plains and into the north woods. His solid training gave them the same experience that he had lucked into with Old Man Reinert. He apprenticed them out to reliable mentors like Rochon, the French, and

Potawatomi half breed, and Longenecker, the Swiss/Scotch-Irish/Huron with the Sioux wife. He soon had loyal sub-agents from Green Bay to Thunder Bay to the upper Missouri River.

Things went pretty well for Jesse. There was every reason to believe that he was destined to become a major political leader in the Wisconsin Territory. He was showing the way with peaceful relations with the tribes that involved gradual transition from their nomadic existence to settled agriculture and trade.

The rest of this article will be published in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Dennis Boyer is a local writer and the author of *Giants in the Land: Folktales and Legends of Wisconsin*, *Driftless Spirits: Ghosts of Southwestern Wisconsin*, and other books.

ANNOUNCING HGAGCS: [HNET LIST on German-American and German-Canadian Studies](#)

On **May 15, 1999 at 7 p.m.**, *The Madison Black Wolf* minor league baseball team is playing against the *German Nationalmannschaft*.

We would like to organize a group outing. If interested, please give us a call **not later than April 20, 1999** and let us know how many of you would like to participate. Phone 262-7546

Spring Mini-Conference: German Dialects in the Midwest

by Randi Stebbins, Linguistics Dept.

Members of the German-speaking community often sigh and say that German is dying out in Wisconsin and in the rest of the country. There are fewer German newspapers than a decade ago and few schools that teach **in** German. The third and fourth generations don't even speak German at home. English is taking over. Is the picture so grim? If so, why is this change taking place? Those are exactly the topics that are to be discussed at the Spring Mini-Conference at the Max Kade Institute this year.

Both Steve Geiger and Phil Weber will be talking on existing German dialects in the Midwest. Phil's talk centers on speakers of an East Frisian dialect in Iowa and their attempts to preserve the language. Steve presents his fieldwork of a Darmstadt dialect of Hessian German which is still spoken in Sheboygan county in Wisconsin. He examines signs of language contact with English and other dialects of German.

Joe Salmons takes a wider look at about why there has been a shift away from German in the public and private spheres. His theory attributes this shift to wider social and political changes that have been taking place in the U.S. in the last century. The changes are not specific to German-speaking communities, as other theories have claimed.

This year's mini-conference will give you a chance to see some of the new research going on at the Institute and in German dialect studies. It promises to be informative and of interest to anyone associated with German-speaking communities. Read the [abstracts](#) to find out more and come to the conference on **March 27th**!

Lecture Notes:

Hartmut Keil on "Race & Ethnicity: Slavery

and the German Radical Tradition"

On Feb. 3, the Max Kade Institute was privileged to have a lecture by Professor Hartmut Keil from the Universität Leipzig and German Historical Institute, Washington. Best known to many in Europe and North America for his works on the German-American left and labor history, Keil has turned his attention to the complex relationship between African-Americans and German immigrants in a number of recent works.

This talk explored the intellectual background of opposition to slavery among German liberal and republican thinkers in the context of the Enlightenment and Europe's general *Amerikabild*. Keil sketched a "functioning intellectual network" connecting German and American enlightened circles and focusing on two key figures, Alexander von Humboldt and Otilie Assing. On both continents, Alexander von Humboldt's views on slavery came to play a significant role. In a 1826 book on Cuba, Humboldt delivered scathing condemnations, such as this: "Without doubt, slavery is the greatest of all the evils which have afflicted mankind." In the US elections of 1856 and 1860, Republicans used those views to woo especially German-American voters and Humboldt corresponded with John Fremont.

Otilie Assing grew up in circles connected directly to Humboldt's and became an important voice for liberal and feminist views. She became a journalist writing for two of Germany's most important papers, the *Morgenblatt für gebildete Leser* and the *Allgemeine Zeitung*. She came to the US in 1853 and settled in Hoboken, NJ, (home to a thriving community of liberal and radical Germans at that time) where she continued to write for both outlets — to the extent that for many German readers "her views became the standard interpretation at the height of the conflict over slavery and abolition from 1856 to 1865". She also met and developed an extremely close personal relationship with Frederick Douglass and introduced him to German writers and thinkers.

Keil documented carefully how Assing's reports to Germany made the case against the "slavocracy" as fundamentally incompatible with American notions of freedom. She also reported on the lives of African-Americans, debunking stereotypes and praising the "industrious workers and faithful allies" in free communities like Beaufort, SC, and the bravery and valor soldiers in Black regiments.

The talk made clear not only the intellectual underpinnings of German progressives' opposition to the "peculiar institution", but also the crosscurrents and mutual influences between European and American intellectual circles. African-American intellectual leaders like Douglass had impact on both groups through Assing. One of the most interesting conclusions was that the Black abolitionist community seems to have been influenced by the German-American radicals and liberals they were introduced to by Assing. Keil speculates that this might account for the generally favorable opinions that African-Americans held of German immigrants at the time.

This spring, Dr. Rosemarie Lester is again offering an **advanced intermediate German conversation class** that includes some reading, writing, and new videos that focus on sociocultural issues of Germany today.

Classes meet **Thursdays, 7:30-9pm**, alternately at the MKI and (for the video sessions) at 904 Spaight Street.

Anyone interested in **Teatime German, Wednesdays from 5-6pm**, should call **255-7039** for more information.

Researching Sudeten-German Ancestors

by Edward G. Langer

Genealogical research in the Czech Republic is much easier since the fall of Communism. Requests for information are no longer viewed with suspicion, but rather as a way for the Czech government or private genealogical researchers to

earn Western currency. At present, one can contract with a private researcher in the Czech Republic at a reasonable rate. I recommend hiring an independent researcher who is familiar with all the locations where relevant records may be found.

The Sudeten-German website includes postings by both German and American researchers. The address is:

http://www2.genealogy.net/gene/reg/SUD/sudet_en.html

I recommend you join the two major genealogical societies that deal with the Czech Republic. The Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International (P.O. Box 16225, St. Paul, MN 55116-0225) promotes the genealogy of all the ethnic groups that were present in Czechoslovakia in 1918. The German-Bohemian Heritage Society (P.O. Box 822, New Ulm, MN 56073-0822) deals only with German-Bohemians. Both publish relevant articles and allow members to post genealogical queries in their periodicals.

Finally, some Americans have started creating databases of Sudetengerman emigrants. For example, Jim Kleinschmidt, 2917 Muir Road, Madison, WI 53719, is compiling a data base of emigrants, both German and Czech, from Northeast Bohemia. His e-mail address is JimEd9483@aol.com

Pennsylvania German Resources

by Dennis Boyer

Many Wisconsinites might find the task of researching their Pennsylvania German heritage daunting. They may also find the terms *Dutch* and *Deitsch* confusing. Pennsylvania German is the proper ethnic and linguistic label applied to the German dialectspeaking immigrants who came to North America between 1683 and 1775. Pennsylvania *Dutch* is a term that arose out the corruption of *Deitsch* by English colonial authorities (it is an almost universally used selfidentifier term used by nonacademics in southeast Pennsylvania). *Deitsch* is the dialect term for the dialect and the people and is essentially a Pfälzer dialect with the spice of German as spoken in Alsace and northern Switzerland in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Pennsylvania German pioneers came to southern Wisconsin even before statehood via the northern route of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Some came via the southern route of Virginia, Kentucky and the Mississippi River. This latter group was not as consciously German and often adopted the folkways of ScotchIrish Appalachia. Except for small Anabaptist religious communities which came in more recent times, they did not retain their identity and mostly merged into broader Wisconsin German culture.

Both the Wisconsin State Historical Society and the Max Kade Institute maintain materials related to the Pennsylvania Germans. The State Historical Society has many excellent Pennsylvania German genealogical resources as do the regional resource centers of the Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormons).

But for those who wish to delve deeper into this portion of ancestry or interest, a number of nonWisconsin resources can be mentioned:

PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN SOCIETY Since 1891 this group has done the primary work of promoting research and cultural preservation. They publish excellent annual volumes, a newsletter, and a quarterly journal (all included within the price of membership). PO Box 244, Kutztown, PA 19530, Fax (610)8949551.

CENTER FOR PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN STUDIES Located at Millersville State University, the center is directed by Prof. Emeritus C. Richard Beam (one of the preeminent scholars of the dialect). The center publishes a newsletter which focuses on dialect poetry, music, and literature and the individuals who produced it. 406 Spring Drive, Millersville, PA 17551, Fax (717)8728506.

PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTER A combination museum, archive and living history demonstration site. Conducts a delightful Fall Heemet Fescht. On the campus of Kutztown State University in restored

period buildings. c/o Kutztown State University, Kutztown, PA 19530, Fax (610)6831330.

FEREINICHT DEITSCH FULK A network of informal *Deitsch* cultural groups, it serves as a major source of information and access to dialect events (banquets, "roasts", church services and meetings of fraternal Grundsau Lodges). Publishes a dialect newsletter, *Da Ausauga*. c/o Kenneth Kramer, 4911 Pine Grove Circle, Wescosville, PA 18106.

PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH HOBBIES AND MUSIC Conventional hobby shop with a Pennsylvania German twist. Retail onsite sales and catalog sales of dialect music tapes, dictionaries, language instructional material, folklore books, humor, "hex " signs , and more. Owner, Keith Brintzenhoff, is a dialect musician and vocalist and is available for performances. 157 W. Main, Kutztown, PA 19530,

Fax (610)6839060.

**Reading Immigrant History By The Books
Virtual Exhibit On-line!**

This exhibit is a sample of MKI special collection of imprints in the German language published in Wisconsin in the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. It was prepared by Lisa Cerami and Annie Reinhardt.

Book Review:

Heritage On Stage: The Invention of Ethnic Place in America's Little Switzerland
by Steven D. Hoelscher (University of Wisconsin Press, 1998)

Reviewed by Eric Jarosinski, Dept. of German

As many already know, the small Swiss-American town of New Glarus in south-central Wisconsin is an inviting place for a weekend day-trip, a hearty dinner in a chalet-style restaurant, or a colorful summer cultural festival. But as Steven D. Hoelscher tells us in his new book, *Heritage on Stage: The Invention of Ethnic Place in America's Little Switzerland*, the village has much more to offer than just a good schnitzel and the cozy ambiance of Old-world nostalgia.

Hoelscher, who teaches Geography at Louisiana State University, argues that New Glarus is a fascinating case study in the way Americans create ethnic identity. Writing as both a participant in the town's cultural life as well as a keen critic and observer, he offers an intimate portrait of the town and its people along with an insightful analysis of the broader context of the community's many ethnic festivals and traditions.

Founded some 150 years ago by a small group of immigrants from the Swiss canton Glarus, the town has since clung to its ethnic roots in its Swiss-inspired architecture, cuisine, and folk life. Its Heidi Festival, *Schwingfest* (Swiss wrestling), and annual summer performance of Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* attract thousands of visitors annually, including many who come all the way from Switzerland. Indeed, as Hoelscher writes, the community's connection to its heritage has remained strong enough for to earn it a mention in a Swiss textbook on the United States as "more Swiss than Switzerland."

Now several generations removed from its original Swiss settlers, New Glarus gives rise to numerous questions about how contemporary Swiss-Americans go about defining themselves. Hoelscher asks, for example, just how the town's residents decide what is still to be considered "Swiss," how tourism and other economic factors might affect that definition, and how the town wishes to portray its Swiss heritage to visitors. Or, as Hoelscher puts it, "Why and how are ethnic places invented?"

In addressing these questions, his investigations combine history with geography, and sociology with social history and performance studies. This interdisciplinary approach leads him to describe a complex process at work in New Glarus which he calls "conspicuous ethnic production." This Hoelscher defines as a deliberate manipulation of the past in the service of the present. In other words, the continual re-interpretation and re-invention of what it means to be Swiss, in light of geographic and cultural separation from the home country, along with the demands of historical and social change.

For Hoelscher, ethnicity and heritage in the New Glarus of the 1990's have become fluid and constructed, more a matter of individual choice for modern-day Swiss-Americans than of biological determination. "Instead of maintaining their ethnic organizations and group culture," he writes, "people of third and later generations are more concerned with maintaining a sense of ethnic identity and are discovering new ways of expressing that ethnicity in suitable ways that bear little or no social cost: taking part in festivals, eating ethnic foods, and visiting places and museums associated with one's ethnic past."

Such an interpretation of the community's history and ethnic festivals, he argues, is consistent with a larger national trend. He writes that "with increasing suburbanization and the destruction of traditional place-based communities, an ever greater demand exists for places conspicuously constructed to impart an ethnic identity — for invented ethnic places."

In addressing these larger cultural trends, Hoelscher gives his detailed study of the Swiss-American experience greater contextual footing, while also making it useful for examining broader questions of American ethnicity in general. Its originality and insight make *Heritage on Stage* a valuable contribution to academic study at the same time that it is a readable and interesting account of a small town with a deep pride in its past.

Other books of interest:

The Atlas of Ethnic Diversity in Wisconsin by Kazimierz J. Zaniewski & Carol R. Rosen, University of Wisconsin Press, 1998. (A review of this book is planned for a future Newsletter.)

Strong Wine: The Life and Legend of Agoston Haraszthy by Brian McGinty, Stanford University Press, 1998.

In Memory of Dr. Erich H. Markel

Dr. Erich Markel, long-time President of the Max Kade Foundation, died suddenly on January 4, at his home in New Jersey. Dr. Markel was born in 1920 in Siebenbürgen. He studied law in Vienna, Prague and Erlangen-Nürnberg, and at George Washington University. His research centered on comparative jurisprudence, international law, legal history and philosophy. He taught at George Washington University, Miami University and Valparaiso University. While in Washington, D.C., Dr. Markel served as advisor to the United States Dept. of Justice.

In 1959 Dr. Markel became the first President and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Max Kade Foundation. During his forty years, the Foundation gave grants to scholars and universities in the U.S. and Europe to promote international understanding, including many significant grants to promote German Studies and German-American Studies. He received numerous honors for his philanthropic, legal and academic work, including the Cross of the Order of Merit, 1st Class, the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit, and the Knight Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit from the Federal Republic of Germany, medals of merit from the both the Austrian and German Academies of Science, and honorary doctorates from Valparaiso University, University of Massachusetts, Middlebury College and Colorado College.

Dr. Markel worked on behalf of the Max Kade Foundation to establish the Max Kade Institute at UW-Madison in 1981.

In the years since its establishment, he has generously supported the Institute's projects, and particularly its library.

Dr. Hans G. Hachman has been named President of the Max Kade Foundation, and will carry on the projects to which Dr. Markel had for so long committed his time and energy.

What the Heck is Planned Giving?

by Russell Howes, UW Foundation

Planned giving is a phrase that has been around for a number of years, but what exactly does it mean? To start with, the topic of Planned Giving should be broken down into its two components.

What this really starts out with is "giving." It begins with your decision that the work being done by a particular organization is important to you and is something you wish to support. Without this key decision, all of the planning in the world will come to nothing.

It is only after you have decided that you want to make a gift that you should, for your own benefit and for the benefit of the charity, sit down and think about how you are making that gift.

There are tax consequences to every charitable gift and they largely hinge on what you use to make the gift and whether you are retaining any benefits from your giving. A planned gift can be as simple as deciding that it might be better for you to make a gift of IBM stock instead of writing a check.

For example, if you want to make a gift of \$1,000 - you can always write a check and take a charitable deduction for that amount. But think for a moment about choosing to make a gift of a few shares of IBM stock (or a similar publicly traded company) in which you have a low cost basis.

By transferring the stock, you can make the same size gift that you intended to make, without declaring any capital gains tax. The combination of capital gains tax savings and the ability to deduct the current fair market value of the stock makes this a most attractive option for many individuals.

There also are other ways to make a "tax-advantaged" gift. Outright gifts do not just have to be cash, but can include publicly traded stock, closely held stock, real estate or even personal property. In each situation, there are some tax considerations that need to be examined, but being creative about how you support the Max Kade Institute is the essence of planned giving.

Planned giving also can mean deferred giving. The simplest deferred gift is a legacy, either made through a will or a simple trust. It is as easy as inserting a provision that says: "I hereby give, devise and bequeath to the University of Wisconsin Foundation for the benefit of the Max Kade Institute for German American Studies, the sum of \$_____."

Gifts from estates can either be a specific dollar amount or a percentage of the estate. In many cases, gifts from estates are more sizable than annual gifts and can actually create permanent endowment funds, where the principal is held in perpetuity and annual distributions are made from the fund to carry on the work of the Institute.

There are even opportunities that allow you to set aside principal now, retain an income for yourself and/or others, save capital gains tax and still receive a charitable deduction now for a portion of your gift.

These are called life income plans and such plans include charitable remainder trusts, gift annuities and pooled income funds. All are available through the UW Foundation. We would be happy to discuss these plans and how they work with those wishing to support the Max Kade Institute.

There is no doubt that planned giving includes some tax planning and can be somewhat complicated. It starts, however, with simply wanting to support the work of a worthy organization, such as the Max Kade Institute. The next step is choosing to support it in a way that is smart for you and for the organization.

The UW Foundation would welcome the opportunity to assist those who wish to investigate the possibilities of planned giving. You may contact the Foundation at 263-4545 or write to: University of Wisconsin Foundation, Office of Planned Giving, PO Box 8860, Madison, WI 53708-8860. We would be happy to assist you and make certain that your gift is directed to the Max Kade Institute or any other area of campus that you choose.

Mark your calendar:

April 28, 1999 at 7 p.m., MKI:
"Ach Ya!" Wisconsin's German American Music by James P. Leary

Thursday, May 13, 1999 at 5-6 p.m., Pyle Center,
702 Langdon Street, Madison:
The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Max Kade Institute

From the President of the Friends Board of Directors

In each issue of the *MKI Newsletter* we find a list of eleven Friends of the MKI and two ex-officio members, given the title Board of Directors. What does this group do for the Friends and for the MKI?

The role of the Board is to implement the general policies of the Friends, which are to support and encourage the activities of the Institute by

1. forming a liaison between the Institute and the public;
2. helping the Institute generate better understanding of past, present and future German-American relations through the study of German-American immigrant history and culture;
3. helping the Institute to assist communities and individuals in their efforts to investigate and preserve their German heritage;
4. encouraging financial contributions, endowments and bequests for the benefit of the Institute;
5. encouraging the donation of historical and other relevant material to the collections of the Institute;
6. making distributions to organizations that qualify as tax exempt organizations under the Internal Revenue Code.

The term of office for the Board of Directors is three years, with the provision for one succeeding term, as spelled out in the by-laws. Board members serve without any remuneration. Meetings of the Board are held quarterly, plus the annual meeting for the entire membership at which new Board members are elected by those present. Each board member bring various strengths and experiences to the Friends. Together, the Board plays an important role in carrying out the tasks set forth in the policies listed above. The Friends are growing, and our help is needed to provide the support to the Max Kade Institute and to further its broad and far-reaching projects. To this end, we have established committees for outreach, fund raising, the *Newsletter*, and are developing a speakers bureau.

As of May 13, I will have served two consecutive terms and will regretfully leave the Board of Directors. But as I step down, I encourage you to consider stepping up your involvement in the Friends. If you are interested in serving on the Board or one of its committees, please let us know.

Edward W. Kuenzi, President

Announcing H-GAGCS: H-NET list on German-American and German-Canadian Studies

Sponsored by

**H-Net, Humanities & Social Sciences On-line, Michigan State University
Chair in German-Canadian Studies, University of Winnipeg, Canada
Max-Kade Institute for German-American Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

[About the list](#) | [Web site](#) | [How to subscribe](#)

The H-GAGCS network provides a moderated multi-disciplinary forum for discussion of topics relevant to German-speaking immigrants in North America from the 17th century to the present. Academic disciplines involved include history, geography, ethnic and immigration studies, linguistics, literary and cultural studies. Topics for discussion may include the invention/ transformation of ethnicity and national identities among German Americans and German Canadians, patterns of settlement, patterns of maintenance and change in language and culture, civic participation, methods of conceptualizing and understanding German identity in North America etc. The list addresses an audience of primarily academics and graduate students. We are stressing the value of comparative and cross-border ethnic studies (a diaspora approach) and the idea of cultural regions (which may straddle international borders, e.g. the Northern Great Plains). Contributions on German communities in other parts of the world (South America, Australia) may be included from time to time if they serve a comparative purpose.

We are **not** an advocacy, genealogical or heritage group. GAGCS encourages discussion of methodologies, sharing of research results, book and article reviews, information on archival sources and research funding etc. Like all H-Net lists, H-GAGCS is moderated to edit out material that, in the editors' opinion, is not germane to the list, involves technical matters (such as subscription management requests), is inflammatory, or violates evolving, yet common, standards of Internet etiquette.

H-GAGCS is sponsored by the Chair in German-Canadian Studies, University of Winnipeg, Canada and the Max-Kade Institute for German-American Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison. It is advised by a board of field experts.

The H-GAGCS list is co-edited by Angelika E.Sauer, Chair in German-Canadian Studies, The University of Winnipeg (Canada) asauer@tlu.edu, and Joseph C.Salmons, Director, Max-Kade-Institute for German-American Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, jsalmons@facstaff.wisc.edu. The editors serve two-year renewable terms, with the approval of the H-Net Executive Committee and rotate their duties. The current editor will be identified in all messages coming from the list. The editors will solicit postings (by email, phone and even by regular mail), will assist people in managing subscriptions and setting up options, will handle routine inquiries, and will consolidate some postings. Anyone with suggestions about what H-GAGCS can and might do is invited to send in ideas. The editors will solicit and post newsletter-type information (calls for conferences, for example, or listings of sessions at conventions.)

Message logs and more information about H-GAGCS may be obtained at its website, linked from the H-Net website:

<http://www.h-net.msu.edu/~gagcs>

ABOUT H-NET

H-GAGCS is owned by H-Net, an international network of scholars in the humanities and social sciences that creates and coordinates electronic networks, using a variety of media, and with a common objective of advancing humanities and social science teaching and research. H-Net was created to provide a positive, supportive, equalitarian environment for the friendly exchange of ideas and scholarly resources. H-NET sponsors dozens of e-mail lists and Web sites for them in a variety of disciplines and fields, publishes reviews of scholarly books and articles on the internet, and provides a weekly Job Guide. Our host is Michigan State University. More information can be obtained by sending an e-mail message to h-net@h-net.msu.edu or by browsing our Web site at

<http://www.h-net.msu.edu>

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For technical assistance please contact the H-NET help staff at:

help@h-net.msu.edu.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Angelika Sauer
Joseph Salmons

List archive and information about how to post: <http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~gagcs/>

MKI Spring 1999 Lectures

▶ February 3, at MKI, 7 pm	"German-American Immigrants and the Abolition of Slavery" by Prof. Hartmut Keil, German Historical Institute
▶ March 27, at MKI, 10:00 am	Mini-Conference on German Dialects in the Midwest Speakers will include: - Steve Geiger (UW) Darmstadt Dialect in Sheboygan County - Phil Webber (Central College, Iowa) East Frisian in Iowa - Joe Salmons (UW) Language Shift and Community Structure: Why Wisconsin German Speakers Became English Monolinguals
▶ April 28, at MKI, 7:00 pm	"Ach Ya!" James P. Leary on Wisconsin's German American Music
▶ May 13, 8:00 pm UW-Madison Pyle Center 702 Langdon Street, Madison	German-American Collections of the Milwaukee County Historical Society: Stories Waiting to be Told Robert T. Teske, Milwaukee County Historical Society

Abstracts:

German-American Immigrants and the Abolition of Slavery

Hartmut Keil
German Historical Institute

The relationship between immigrants and African Americans has been described as dominated by racial antagonism and violence, a perspective largely gained by studying Irish immigrants who had a similar socio-economic status and competed for the same jobs in the labor market as, African Americans. This presentation questions the applicability of this model to the second largest immigrant group, i.e. the Germans, arriving, before the Civil War. German immigrants also subscribed to the ideology of nineteenth-century racism, yet theirs often found different and less confrontational expression. The lecture will isolate the specific issue of mutual intellectual traditions and a common philosophical heritage that may account for sympathy for abolitionism and antislavery sentiment among parts of the German immigrant population. It is suggested that European and American Enlightenment thought evolved not in isolation, but through an intense exchange of ideas that crossed the Atlantic in both directions. Attention will be focused on intellectuals like Alexander von Humboldt who had substantial impact on German immigrants; on the journalist Otilie Assing who became closely involved in the abolitionist cause and whose reports reached important intellectual circles in Germany; and on the German-American press.

"Des is noch so escht!": Darmstadt Dialect in Sheboygan County Today

Steven Geiger
UW-Madison

When discussing German in Wisconsin, one often comes across the opinion that most people who still have any knowledge of the language are semi-speakers, people who can no longer make real use of it in communication. This project aims to document the range of ability and sheer number of speakers that still exist in one area of the state. I am making recordings to document and preserve the language as it is being spoken today, in part by clearly fluent speakers.

The initial fieldwork done in this area points to the "Darmstadt" dialect spoken in and around the Sheboygan County community of Rhine, Wisconsin. The speakers refer to their dialect as "Darmstadt dialect," because they know that

their immigrant ancestors (four generations ago) came from the area around the Hessian city of Darmstadt in Germany, and they brought with them the dialect from that region. The dialect has since evolved slightly, showing signs of language contact with American English and other dialects of Modern German. The most prevalent of these signs of contact are due to the need for new words for technological advances, for which there were no words in the dialect of the immigrant generation. Because of this pressure, the language developed such words as `toschter' (Am. E. `toaster'). Loan words can also be found where words could have been taken over but weren't, showing that the language truly is evolving. Structural influence can be seen as well, especially in fixed expressions, such as `dan hame de train genum' (MSG `dann sind wir mit dem Zug gefahren,' Am.E. `then we took the train'). This example shows not only the loan word "train," but also the structural difference, where standard German would make use of a prepositional phrase, which would be considered strange in English (*and then we traveled with the train). Through this example we can see that the dialect pairs itself with the Am.E. construction, rather than the standard German construction. Although the language has undergone these minor changes it can also show us a great deal about language maintenance and preservation. The recordings from this project will be an irreplaceable source of data on German dialects in Wisconsin.

Rescue and Revival: Case Studies Among Iowa Speakers of East Frisian

Phil Webber
Central College, Iowa

During the spring of 1998, more than three dozen speakers (and semi-speakers) of East Frisian were interviewed and/or observed in speech interactional situations. These individuals all live in or near concentrated East Frisian enclaves in Butler, Grundy, and Hardin County.

A selection of recorded material has been preserved in a video anthology that encompasses, in its edited-down version, nearly eight hours of speech samples. The chief investigator has available to him some three to four times that amount of raw primary material.

One fascinating aspect of the community under study is the attempt to preserve and revive the language. (No one denies the fact that the language is in a state of obsolescence, but many are determined not to go down without honorably acquitting themselves, as it were.) The goal of this presentation is to illustrate with videotaped material the range of language competence in the community, and to illustrate how various speakers attempt to revitalize and maintain the language in active use for as long as possible.

Language Shift and Community Structure: Why Wisconsin German Speakers Became English Monolinguals

Joseph Salmons
UW-Madison

Wisconsin has seen massive immigration in the 19th and 20th centuries. For decades and sometimes centuries, many immigrants maintained their imported languages. While numerous speakers of immigrant languages can still be found, most have now since switched to English, the dominant national language. Many explanations have been proposed for this shift, including for the shift from German to English in the midwestern US. This paper breaks with previous views to lay out an account situated in a theory of general societal change and intended to capture a broader range of settings of language shift and language maintenance.

Some scholars have claimed that anti-German sentiment during World War I caused the shift to English in German-American communities, directly or indirectly. Others have attributed roles to the lack of cultural and political unity among German-Americans, the range of dialects (instead of a relatively uniform standard language), geographical isolation, etc. All of these accounts are, though, ultimately unsatisfying. First, these language- or ethnic-group-specific explanations fail to capture close parallels between shift from German to English and shifts in other immigrant groups. Second, completely independent explanations are required for the communities that have successfully maintained German (like the Old Order Amish) and closely related immigrant languages (like Yiddish among Ultraorthodox Jews).

I argue that language shift has been driven by a "Great Change", in the sense of Warren 1978, sweeping American society since the late 19th century, a phenomenon almost entirely external to and independent of German-speaking communities. Warren defines the Great Change as a process in which connections among various local institutions ('horizontal ties') give way to ties between a given institution and its regional, state or national counterpart ('vertical ties'). For example, before the Great Change, a local school was more closely connected to local religious, political and other institutions; after it, it was more closely connected to a state board of education. Verticalization weakened local ties across American society, including in minority language communities, and unraveled the social fabric of language maintenance.

A key test of this new analysis is the close chronological correlation between verticalization and language shift: Loss of horizontal structure is followed closely by shift away from German, first in public domains, and finally in the private sphere. At the same time, communities that maintain immigrant languages are precisely those that have resisted the Great Change. Moreover, this account ties in well with work on the spread of linguistic change (Milroy & Milroy 1992) and on "ethnic persistence and transformation" (Conzen 1990).

"FROM *DORF KAPELLE* TO DUTCHMAN BANDS: RESOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF WISCONSIN GERMAN MUSIC"

JAMES P. LEARY

Wisconsin's Germanic peoples and their descendants have sustained a wide and still-evolving variety of musical traditions, many of which were documented in the mid-1980s by the Wisconsin Folklife Center, in cooperation with the Max Kade Institute. This presentation surveys the Folklife Center's findings through the presentation of audio-visual documentation and offers insights into Wisconsin's contemporary German American musical traditions .

German-American Collections of the Milwaukee County Historical Society: Stories Waiting to be Told

Robert T. Teske

Director, Milwaukee County Historical Society

The research collections of the Milwaukee County Historical Society represent a rich resource for students of German-American history and culture. Dating back to the 1830s and comprised of artifacts, publications, photographs, maps, public records and manuscripts, the Society's collections offer a fascinating view of life in the Deutsch-Athen from the arrival of Wilhelm Strothman, believed to be the first German settler in Milwaukee County, to the present.

The breadth and depth of the Historical Society's German-American collections can be seen by examining selected materials relating to individual community members, businesses, and social and political organizations. Among the individuals worthy of note are Dr. Louis Frank, whose letters chronicle the early German-American experience on the Michigan-Wisconsin frontier; Peter Engelmann, founder of Milwaukee's German-English Academy; and Julius Gugler, the engraver known for his memorial portrait of President Lincoln. Documents describing the Brumder publishing empire, the Steinmeyer grocery business and the Miller brewing company complement the records of individuals. Extensive documentation left by such organizations as the Milwaukee Turn Verien, the Freie Gemeinde and the Socialist Party complete the picture of an extraordinary community deserving of further research and wider appreciation.

Well organized and thoroughly indexed, these collections will play a significant role in a planned series of exhibitions on the ethnic heritage of Milwaukee. However, many elements of the collection remain substantially unexplored, and students of German-American studies are invited to join the Society in making these special materials available to the broadest possible audience.

This lecture will follow the annual meeting and dinner of the Friends of the Max Kade Institute. For more information on the meeting and dinner, contact the Max Kade Institute at 608-262-7546.