

Max Kade Institute Friends Newsletter

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

Barns the focus of Friends dinner

The octagonal Clausing Barn, built in 1897 by German barn-builder Ernst Clausing, was the site of the 2004 Max Kade Institute Friends Annual Dinner. The May 13 event featured a talk by Barn expert Jerry Apps, author of the popular *Barns of Wisconsin*.

At the Board of Directors' meeting prior to dinner, Ed Langer was elected President of the Friends, Bob Bolz was elected Vice President, and Bob Luening was elected Treasurer. The nominating committee chose three people: Bob Luening and Charles James for a second term and Ted E. Wedemeyer for a first term. All three were elected by unanimous vote. Fran Luebke will leave the board since her second term is up. (See related story Page 5)

Bylaw changes which had

New co-director joins the Max Kade staff

German Professor Cora Lee Kluge is the new co-director of the Max Kade Institute. She will share duties with Co-Director Mark Loudon.

Kluge, who has been at the UW-Madison for almost forty years, is a long-time Friends member and has served on the MKI Friends Executive Committee.



Photos courtesy of Charles James



Above: Clausing Barn at Old World Wisconsin. Left: Jerry Apps talks about the barns.

been worked on for the past year by the board of directors were accepted unanimously after a discussion by the full membership.



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Tales of Contact and Change: Traditional Stories of Immigration

By Antje Petty, Assistant Director

The Max Kade Institute and the Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures present "Tales of Contact and Change: Traditional Stories of Immigration." Come and listen to stories from a diverse range of ethnic communities in the Upper Midwest reflecting the immigration experience from the nineteenth century to the present. Join international scholars in exploring traditional narratives in a regional and global context.

Traditional storytellers include:

- Elfrieda Haese (Milwaukee, WI), who will share bilingual narratives and various German dialect versions of jokes, songs, and stories about the Milwaukee German-American way of life.
- Earl Nyholm (Crystal Falls, MI), who will talk about growing up on the Keeweenaw Bay reservation at Baraga/L'Anse, Michigan, as the child of Ojibwe and Swedish parents.
- Mai Zong Vue (Madison, WI), who will share

Max Kade Institute

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Visit the Max Kade Institute on the
World Wide Web at:
<http://csumc.wisc.edu/mki>

Upcoming event

What: A conference and story concert that offers an exciting blend of traditional stories and international scholarship.

Where: To be announced

When: Nov. 12-13, 2004.

The event is free and open to the public.



More details will appear in the fall newsletter.

stories of Hmong cultural adaptation and folk songs.

- Mark Wagler (Madison, WI), who will talk about growing up in an Amish-Mennonite household with Deutsch (Pennsylvania German) as his first language.
- Elaine Wynne (Minneapolis, MN), who has a wealth of stories about the people of her home community in Minnesota, a mix of Scandinavian, German, and Croatian immigrants, and their interface with people from the Red Lake Indian Reservation.

Interspersed with the actual stories, scholars will address topics such as language and language change in traditional stories, the change of traditional folktales after migration, the difficulties of translating tales that are told in dialect and then recorded in another language, the immigrant experience finding expression in poetry and theatre, and many others topics.

Newest Friends Board member has ties to Goethe House

By Eric Platt

Ted Wedemeyer may be a new member of the Friends Board, but he has already spent years supporting German-American activities in Wisconsin as president of the Goethe House in Milwaukee.

As president of the Goethe House, Ted has worked to broaden German-language programs, reinvigorate the organization's board by bringing on "dynamic" new members, and develop a strategic plan. He has strived to strengthen Wisconsin-German ties as well through exchange programs and other initiatives. The Goethe House currently even has a grant pending to bring Yiddish theater back to Milwaukee.

Antje Petty, assistant director of the MKI, said Ted's tenure as president has been an extremely successful one. He has accomplished a great deal in a relatively short amount of time. "Under Ted the Goethe House is now broadening German-language programs for kids and the community as a whole, and is even directing plays," she says. "Ted is very energetic and will be an outstanding asset to the Friend's Board."

Antje also says that she is excited about the partnership opportunities between the MKI and the Goethe House that Ted's presence on the Friends board will bring. Ted agrees. He says that the two organizations are each working to perpetuate German culture. He wants their efforts to be complementary rather than overlapping.

Ted's interest in his German heritage stems back to 1983 when he discovered a box of letters in his parents' home shortly after their death. He

began researching his family's history, and a relative in Washington sent him a German-language diary of an ancestor who came to Watertown in 1849 or soon thereafter.

Ted eventually moved his research overseas and has discovered that he has very interesting German roots. His ancestors were once large landowners in Pomerania and had a rich military heritage.



Wedemeyer

His German relatives continued this tradition into the twentieth century, with one even marrying a Bismarck, although they did strongly oppose Hitler's rise to power. Ted visited his relatives in Germany for the first time twelve years ago and has returned to Germany on "numerous occasions."

Ted's responsibilities extend far beyond the Goethe House and the MKI. He is also a judge, and has served on the District 1 Court of Appeals since 1992. He also held the position from 1982 to 1988.

When he is not working, researching his German heritage, or engaged in Goethe House and now MKI activities, Ted likes to sail. He admits, however, that his work for the Goethe House has not allowed him to take his sailboat out into Lake Michigan all that often in the last few years.

Ted does not seem to begrudge his busy schedule. In fact, when asked about his hobbies, he quickly steered the conversation back to the Goethe House. Preserving Wisconsin's German heritage is clearly a passion for Ted, and his work with the Goethe House and now the MKI is going a long way toward doing just that.

The Friends of the Max Kade Institute Board of Directors

Rose Marie Barber, Milwaukee
Robert Bolz (Vice President), Madison
Charles James, Madison
Jim Klauser, Pewaukee
Ed Langer, Hales Corners (President)
Mark Loudon (*ex-officio*), Watertown

Bob Luening (Treasurer), Madison
Antje Petty (*ex-officio*), Madison
Karyl Rommelfanger, Manitowoc
Jeanne Schueller, Watertown
William Thiel, Eau Claire
Ted E. Wedemeyer, Milwaukee
Don Zamzow, Wausau

MKI staff stays busy with digitization, outreach

By Mark L. Loudon, MKI Director

Summer is here, and I am happy to share with you some of the highlights from the activities of the past spring here at the MKI. As usual, all members of our MKI/CSUMC team were busy with a variety of activities related to our dual mission of research and outreach, including presenting talks and bringing out publications. One special area of activity I would like to share with you is the progress on our three-year "American Languages" project, which began at the end of last year.

As you may recall, we were successful in receiving a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, part of the U.S. Department of the Interior, to digitize rare recordings of German and English dialects and ethnic music from our own MKI archives, as well as from the *Dictionary of American Regional English*, and the Mills Music Library, and to make material from these recordings accessible to scholars and the general public through the Internet. Virtually every member of our staff has been involved in this exciting project in one way or another, and the progress we have made collectively over the past spring has been significant. On the digitization side, Kirk Martinson, a graduate student in German linguistics with incredible technical expertise, has converted a large portion of our recordings into digital format and helped develop a database in which these materials will be stored and accessed in the future. If we continue at the present rate, we will have digitized a wealth of material by the end of the grant in 2006.

Looking to the accessibility side of "American Languages" we hired a talented, hard-working graduate student from the School of Library and Information Studies, Stacey Erdman, who has special expertise in archiving. Stacey, working closely with our librarian/archivist Kevin Kurdylo, has consulted with our project partners across campus and researched Web sites already in existence to help us determine how we might make optimal use of the digitized materials, that is, how these materials made be most effectively accessed by

scholars and the general public through our virtual portal.

Although the materials to be digitized come from many different areas within the U.S., we have decided to begin by focusing on Wisconsin and then spreading out geographically to other parts of the Upper Midwest and beyond. The "American Languages" portal will begin with a map of the state divided into counties. For those counties from which we have certain materials, especially dialect recordings, users will be able to listen to excerpts with the click of a mouse. For the German materials, simultaneous text translations will be given in English. The excerpts featured will be selected not only for their linguistic interest, but also their content, especially topics related to local history. Accompanying the audio clips themselves will be short interpretive essays situating the material into larger contexts (for example, giving background information on interesting dialectal features or explaining in more detail aspects related to the content).

As a pilot project, I traveled in April to the annual spring meeting of the Pommerscher Verein near Wausau and played excerpts from five dialect speakers made in the summer of 1968. Only one is still living, but all speakers were well known in the community and told fascinating stories of the early history of Marathon County, including the experiences of the first settlers, contact with Indians, and the extent to which Pomeranian Low German was maintained. The reception among the listeners was very positive, reinforcing how important (and enjoyable) it is for us to build bridges between the University and the larger community. In the future, we hope teachers will also make use of these materials, bringing the rich history of our state alive in a way not possible through print media alone.

And also on the topic of bridge-building and teachers, I'd like to express my congratulations to MKI Assistant Director Antje Petty for her hard work in organizing our recent transatlantic workshop, which linked, via video conferencing, teach-

Thank you, Fran! Welcome Ed!

By Antje Petty, Assistant Director

One of the rituals of the Friends' annual meetings is the regular rotation of members on the Board of Directors. Fran Luebke had reached the end of her maximum two terms on the Board and Ted E.

Wedemeyer was elected as a new member (see story on Page 3) At the subsequent new Board of Directors meeting, Ed Langer was elected the Friends' new President with Bob Bolz and Bob Luening again accepting the positions of Vice President and Treasurer respectively. Karyl Rommelfanger graciously agreed to serve as Secretary for another term.

During her tenure—whether as President, Secretary or “just” as a member of the Friends—Fran has given incredible support to the Institute. Fran originally heard about the MKI through her research into her own family history. Since then Fran has represented the Institute on many occasions and has been a tireless spokesperson for MKI's library and archive as a depository of historical family documents



Luebke

and a resource for family historians. Fran and her husband Neill themselves donated a set of historically and linguistically very valuable nineteenth-century diaries written by one of Neill's ancestors to the Institute. Selections of the Brandenburg Diaries, as we've come to call them, will be published in the coming years.

In 2001, Fran was instrumental in the Friends role of creating a financially stable future for the Institute within the framework of the University, by getting the Friends' \$45,000 matching challenge off the ground. As most of you know, that challenge was met by the German Department and the College of Letters and Science, and provided key support at a crucial moment.

Working with Fran has been a true pleasure, her energy and enthusiasm being nothing but contagious. In parting from the Board, Fran decided to become a life-member of the Friends, supporting the MKI in yet another profound way. Thank you, Fran!

At the same time, we are very happy to have Ed Langer as the new President of the Friends. Ed has been a Friend and supporter of the Institute for many years and was President once before in 2000–2001. Welcome back, Ed!

ers and graduate students from Wisconsin and Hannover, Germany. The workshop was centered on how topics related to immigration, past and present, in the United States and in Germany, can be incorporated into curricula at various levels. The success of this event speaks to the importance of strengthening the links between the MKI and CSUMC and schools.

Finally, one other piece of positive news. Starting this coming fall, the directorship of the MKI will be shared between myself and my friend and colleague in the German department, Cora Lee Kluge. The many responsibilities bound up with leading the MKI, complicated somewhat

by my recent move to Milwaukee (O commuter train, where art thou?), have made this change necessary. It is a particularly auspicious change, though, in that Cora Lee is a leading scholar in the area of German-American literature and culture, complementing nicely my interests in the area of language. I am excited to begin the fall working closely with Cora Lee, as well as all the members of our gifted and hard-working staff.

My thanks to the entire staff, as well as to you, our Friends, for your stalwart support over the past academic year. A very happy and enjoyable summer to you all!

Mark

Pommerscher Verein group hears the story of how dialect tapes were rescued and preserved

Editor's note: This article excerpt is reprinted with permission from the June 2004 issue of Dat Pommerscher Blatt newsletter, a publication of the Pommerscher Verein of Central Wisconsin. Max Kade Institute Director Mark Loudon spoke at the group's April meeting in Wausau.

**By Linda Wiederhoeft
Rib River Ballroom
Sunday, April 25, 2004**

Prior to the start of the program DuWayne Zamzow lead the group in singing Low German songs from our Verein song books. President Zamzow then called the meeting to order at 2 p.m. New members were introduced and welcomed. Everyone joined in to sing Happy 90th birthday to Adeline Utech. We all greeted our neighbors seated near us at our tables. The Verein dance group performed a couple of their new dances, the Vadmal and Putt Yenter. Bob Gruling conducted a quick lesson using a table place setting as teaching aides.

Don Zamzow introduced our program speaker for the day, Mark Loudon, director of the Max Kade Institute in Madison. Mark has new material that was recently discovered, tapes of individuals that were spoken in Platt by friends and relatives of our members. These conversations were recorded in 1968. Mark is giving the Verein and the family members each a copy of these conversations. Mark gave a brief history of how the tapes were found.

Max Kade Institute earned a \$234,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Interior: Institute of Museum. The grant made it possible to do the "American Language" in German-America and English-American dialects that existed in the United States in the 1940s. The 3-year grant's main focus was on the Wisconsin Germans and

English. It also made it possible to re-record the 16 mm reel-to-reel tapes into the new digital format of CDs. In the near future there will be a website available that will show a map with the counties listed and you will be able to click on the country and be able to listen to the dialects and read the texts from each county.

In the summer of 1968, there were numerous in-depth interviews with Low German speakers where the information was put on to reel-to-reel tapes. These interviews were conducted by then Professor Jürgen Eichhoff, the founder of the Max Kade Institute. After the tapes had been completed, Eichhoff moved to the University of Pennsylvania, taking the tapes with him. Loudon had been asking if these tapes were anywhere to be found, the response was no. In January 2004, Loudon received a phone call from Penn State University Library and was asked if he wanted the boxes with the tapes that were found there. If not, they were to be destroyed. Needless to say Mark had the boxes immediately sent to Madison. Once the boxes were received and the tapes played, they learned that they covered a range of dialects from various parts of the State. Mark found that there were 5 people who likely will be familiar to our Verein members. They were: Ervin Baumann, Milfred Riemer, Arnold Voigt, Karl Heinrich Voigt, and Mrs. Esther Bloch. Each of the participants was given a set of questions and was asked to answer them in Platt. They were asked to repeat some of the classic Wenker sentences used in Germany in the 1800s to document various kinds of dialects. Professor Eichhoff conducted the interviews where he gave each participant a subject question to be responded to in Low German in narrative form.

Milfred Riemer

Question: What was it like in Rib Falls?

Answer: Sawmills, some people came from Manitowoc around 1856. There were sawmills and a

gristmill.

Arnold Voight

Question: On history. Answer:

All the trees had been cut. They would take wagons to Stevens Point in later years. Earlier they would do the route to Stevens Point by foot.

Also, they had to grease the runners so they would slide through mud.

Erwin Baumann

Question:

About the first settlers.

Answer: Grandfather had come from Pommern through Watertown, and then came up north by foot or riding. He had to get the money together to build a log house and to go back down to get a wife. Everything up here was bush.

Karl Voigt

Question: If a lot of people his age still spoke Platt. Answer: A lot of people spoke Platt if the family spoke Low German. He felt the boys his age spoke more Platt than the girls.

Esther Bloch

Question: Were there many Indians? Answer: There were a few Indians. Her father said in winter camp, some would come to the house and trade baskets, made from slippery elm, for side pork. Also, when she taught school some teachers were afraid of the Indian children and would set up the children to be expelled or have them fail.

Professor Louden brought two or three copies of each tape, so that the Verein would have a copy and a copy could be given to the families.

Freistadt had ten speakers that had been re-

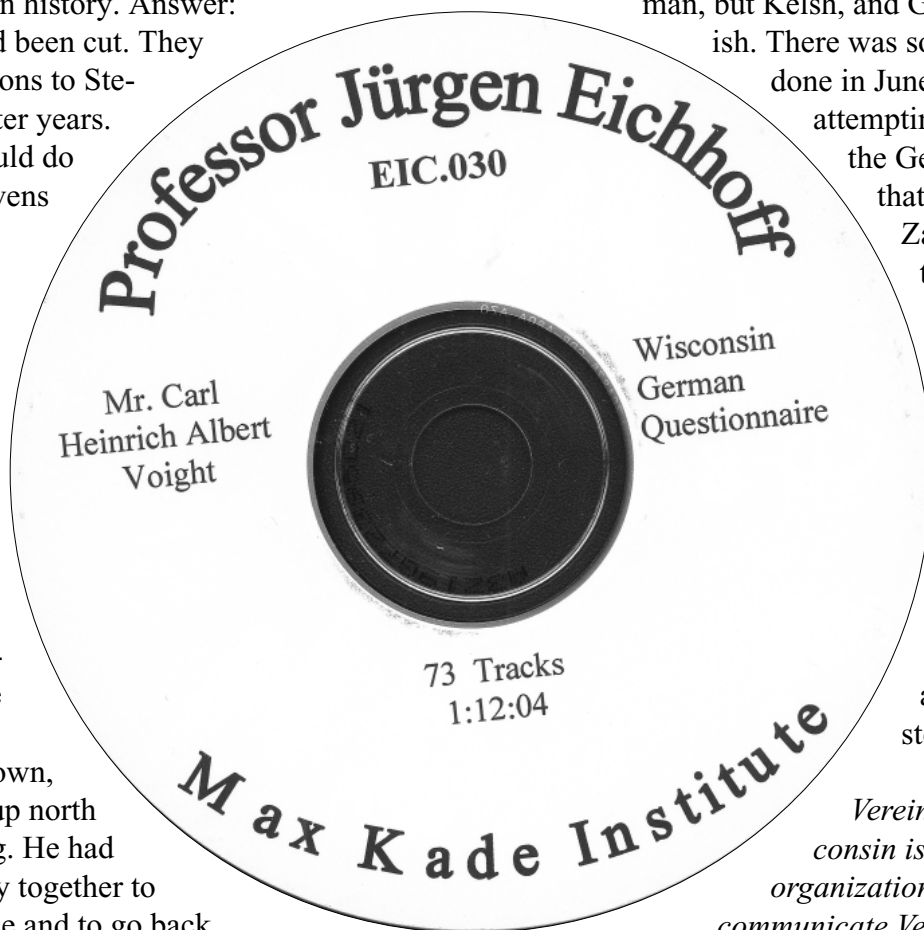
corded, as well as other individuals from Superior, LaCrosse, and Eau Claire. Not only was there German, but Kelsh, and German-Swedish. There was some recording

done in Juneau County,

attempting to cover all the German dialects in that area. DuWayne Zamzow said that their family had gotten a stool from the Indians in trade for bacon.

Ray Jahns, program chairman, presented Professor Louden with a Verein beer stein.

Pommerscher Verein Central Wisconsin is a not-for-profit organization intended to communicate Verein news and information about history, heritage, and language of immigrants from Pomerania to Wisconsin. For more information about the group or its newsletter, Dat Pommersche Blatt, contact Don Zamzow, donz@gitllc.com.



For more information about the Eichhoff recordings or anything else in the Max Kade Institute's collection, contact MKI Librarian Kevin Kurdylo at (608) 262-7546 or kkurdylo@wisc.edu. The Max Kade Institute, 901 University Bay Drive, Madison, is open M-F 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. by appointment only. MKI's web site: <http://mki.wisc.edu/>



Poems of Gemütlichkeit, chuckles, and Umlauts: The work of Kurt M. Stein

By Kevin Kurdylo, MKI Librarian

The Max Kade Institute has long been involved in studying the linguistic and sociological impact of German dialects in the United States. One aspect of this impact involves the oftentimes humorous application of German dialect in literature. For an example of such writing, let's take a peek at several books of poetry written by Kurt M. Stein in the early twentieth century. Employing a form of dialect poetry that mixed German words and grammatical structure with English loan words and idiomatic phrases, these books have titles indicative of their content, including *Die Schönste Lengevitch* (1926), *Gemixte Pickles* (1927), and *Limburger Lyrics* (1932).

Reading these poems requires a basic understanding of German along with a certain amount of both concentration and relaxation, as sometimes the true meaning of Stein's sentences comes through suddenly with a sense of *Aha!* In the title poem, "Die Schönste Lengevitch," two pairs of German immigrants meet on the street in an American city. One couple has lived here awhile, while the other two are "Greenhorns," or more recent arrivals. When one gentleman asks a question in "gebrochenes" English, the other seeks to answer in his English-influenced German, with the result being that these two men from Germany cannot understand each other in either language!

Den andern Abend ging mei Frau
Und ich a Walk zu nehme'.
Of course, wir könnten a Machine
Auffordern, but ich claime
Wer forty Waist hat, wie mei Frau,
Soll exerzeiseln, ennyhow.

Und wie wir so gemütlich geh'n
Elang die Avenoo,
Da bleibt a Couple vor uns stehn.
Ich notiss gleich ihr' Schuh',

Und sag zu meiner Frau: "Christine,
Ich mach a Wett' das sein zwei Grüne."

A Greenhorn kennt man bei sei Schuhs
(Das muss ich euch erkläre).
Ich wunder wie sie's stende tun
So tighte boots zu weareh.
Es gibt mir jedesmal a pain-
Doch dass iss somet'ing else again.

Der Mann stared mich a while lang an
Als wollt er etwas frage,
Denn blushed er wie a Kid bis an
sei hartgeboilten Krage',
Und macht a Bow, und sagt zu mir:
"Pardong, Sir, holds ze tramway here?"

"In English," sag ich, "oder Deutsch
Da kann ich fluent rede,
But die Sprach wo du talke tuhst
Die musst du mir translehteh."
"Sie sprechen Deutsch? Na, lieber Mann,
Wo hält denn hier die Straßenbahn?"

"Ah, wo die street-car stoppeh tut!"
Sag ich, "das willst du wisse'!
Well, schneidt hier crast die empty Lots,
Der Weg is hart zu misseh',
Und dort wo du das Brick House siehst,
Da turnst du and läufst zwei Block East."

"Ich fürchte ich beläst'ge Sie,"
Sagt er, "mit meinen Fragen;
Doch würden sie so gütig sein
Mir das auf Deutsch zu sagen?"
"In Deutsch!" schrei ich. "Na, denkst
denn du
Ich talk in Tschinese oder Soouh?"

Bieted der Nerf nicht einiges?
By gosh, es iss zum lache'.
In vierzehn Tag' vergisst der fool
Sei eig'ne Muttersprache.

Wenn's net for uns old Settlers wär
Gäb's bald kei Schönste Lengevitch mehr.

The irony is that the “old Settler” sees himself as a guardian of his native German language, and is unaware of how much his speech has been affected by English words and phrases. Notice how English words are assimilated and inflected in the German manner, e.g., “affordern,” “exerzeiseln,” and “translehteh.” Other English words have simply been incorporated fully, such as “walk,” “blushed,” and “fool.” Finally, some words have assumed new, mixed forms between the two languages, revealing a German pronunciation of English words, using English endings for German root words, or vice versa, as in “Avenoo,” “Nerf,” “Schuhs,” and “tighte.”

Jacket blurbs from Stein's books call these poems “the most hilariously funny dialect verse in our literature. Certainly it is all of that and, in addition, is richly human and sympathetic.” The *Chicago Evening Post* claimed they were “Not a burlesque but the actual everyday speech of our parents or grandparents turned into some of the funniest verse in any language.” Of course, we cannot say for certain if this language was ever spoken by anyone's relatives, or if it is a unique creation of Kurt Stein. In an introduction to *Die Schönste Lengevitch*, Richard Atwater quotes Stein as saying:

[I]t is quite natural that the German peasant transplanted in this country used such words as steam-heat, gas-grates, or even street-cars, for he did not know their German equivalents, having had no occasion to use them. But even the better educated classes emigrating from cities, very soon fall into the habit of using English expressions for nearly everything met with in daily life....To me, the most interesting thing is the giving of new meanings to words through similarity of sound or association of ideas. For instance, the most common: like (adverb, *similar*): gleich; hence, *to like*—gleichen. Then verbal trans-

lations of idiomatic phrases: *I've made up my mind*—Ich habe meine Meinung aufgemacht (*for sich entscheiden or entschliessen.*) Or, Ich wunder (*I wonder*) for Ich möchte wissen. These are all very common.

While the poems may be based upon actual linguistic developments among German-speaking immigrants, we must also consider whether the humorous aspects might not be somewhat at the expense of the subjects themselves. Richard Atwater claims that “Americans have laughed, for more years than we can remember, over the fact, disclosed in the Sunday newspapers by The Katzenjammer Kids and on the stage by the “Dutch” comedian of the Weber and Fields tradition, that people of German ancestry living in the United States speak English with a noticeable Teutonic brogue.”

The predominant view of such dialect language is that it stigmatizes the characters who use it, making them appear inferior and the objects of derision. Dr. Holger Kersten, in “The Creative Potential of Dialect Writing in Later-Nineteenth-Century America,” points out that “the basic problem lies in the tendency to devalue certain forms of language use with reference to a standard form,” causing “deviant forms” to be regarded as inferior, a view that has serious consequences for the status of their users. He instead reveals that as writers used unconventional linguistic forms to “disrupt the routines of linguistic perception, they provided their audiences with a different kind of aesthetic experience and created opportunities for new and surprising insights and sensations.”

It certainly seems that Stein enjoyed playing with language. Some of his poems seek to convert traditional masterpieces such as *Tristan and Isolde*, *Aida*, *Hamlet*, *Faust*, and *Lohengrin* into his own “*lengevitch*.” The poems are advertised as “a delicate Treat für Eye, Ear, Nose und Sofort.... der ganze Gamut von Human Emotions, von Liebe zu Liverwurst, inclusive, wird darin getoucht.”

The merit of Stein's works receives a boost as well from this interesting tidbit:

A browse through the Internet shows that *Die*

Collection Feature continued from Page 9

Schonste Lengevitch and *Gemixte Pickles* were in Theodore Dreiser's private library!

Works consulted

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K. M. S. (Stein, Kurt M.) *Gemixte Pickles*. New York: Covici, Friede, 1930.

K. M. S. (Stein, Kurt M.) *Limburger Lyrics, Oder Odes in die Schönste Lengevitch*. New York: Covici, Friede, 1932.

Stein, Kurt. *Die Schönste Lengevitch*. Chicago: Pascal Covici, 1927.

Editor's note: A feature on the new acquisition of materials related to the founder of the Milwaukee Turners, August Willich (1810–1878), will appear in the Fall 2004 edition.



New Library Acquisitions

A listing of recent library acquisitions can be found on our Web site as a link from the News page or at the URL: <http://csumc.wisc.edu/mki/Library/NewAcqs/NewAcqs.htm>.

Many thanks to Clifford Albrecht Bernd; Ingeborg Carsten-Miller; Paula Gardina; Harold C. Habein; Holger Kersten; Renate Lucht; Gretchen Rosing; and Pete VanDerSchaeagen (on behalf of his mother-in-law, Clara Papenfuhs-Larsen) for their donations.

A highlight from recent donations is the 8-page document, *Schmitt Family History*. The history was written in 1923 "by William H. Schmitt, who was born in 1852 in Barton, Wisconsin. He was the youngest son of Christian Schmitt [an emigrant from Alsace/Elsass/Elsace] who lived with his family in Barton Township, Washington County, Wisconsin, before moving to Minnesota. Georg Schmitt, older brother of William H. Schmitt, died in the Civil War. He was a member of the 27th Regiment, Wisconsin Volunteers. George W. Schmidt (name changed for unknown reason) was a grandson of Christian Schmitt who served for a time in the Wisconsin legislature. Another descendant of Christian Schmitt is Dr. Harrison H. Schmitt, a geologist and astronaut in the Apollo program. He was the only scientist and [one of the last men] to walk on the moon" (Dec. 11, 1972). Donated by Harold C. Habein.

— Kevin Kurdylo

Kluge continued from Page 1

writers and bringing their stories to light. Some of the important yet rapidly disappearing pieces of immigrant history are featured in her soon-to-be-published anthology, *Other Witnesses: An Anthology of Literature of the German Americans, 1850–1914*.

The anthology includes prose, drama, and poetry. From describing the landscape and life in America as these writers knew it, to explaining how business deals were done in frontier America, these texts reveal much about America during this period. The writers, “though important ones, have become unknown figures, and I’m bringing them back into view,” said Kluge. “These texts are vanishing. This work should have been done one hundred years ago.” In some cases, Kluge is forced to publish only partial texts because the full document has been lost.

Kluge’s introductions to the ten individual anthology chapters provide the necessary scholarly apparatus, as well as situating the texts within the historical development of the United States.

Kluge points out that Wisconsin should be the center for this kind of research. The libraries and archives in Madison and Milwaukee are a gold mine for German American literature.

Former MKI Director Joe Salmons said Kluge’s forthcoming anthology “will be the most important work on German-American literature in decades, and quite possibly the most important ever. Simply making so many rare and previously unknown works widely available will spur new research and better understanding of this material; material central to understanding the experiences of one of the largest groups of immigrants to North America.”

Kluge grew up in Lawrence, KS., and she still frequently visits her parents, ages 99 and 95, who reside there. (Her mother is from Janesville, WI.) Kluge earned her Ph.D. from Stanford in German and the Humanities and has been at UW–Madison since 1965, longer than any other faculty member in the Department.

From 1996 to 2001 she served as editor of *Monatshefte* (means ‘monthly’ but has for many years been published quarterly), the oldest con-



Cora Lee Kluge and Ernst-Christian Kluge, as photographed by her daughter Lucy Plahmer, England, June 2003.

tinuously published journal in the United States devoted exclusively to German studies. She has also done outreach about German-American immigration, including coordinating a highly successful summer forum course in 1999 titled “German Immigrants to the United States: 1848 to Present.”

Kluge has spent part of recent summers working with the Sommerschule für Englisch in Wust (Sachsen-Anhalt), where she is serving again this year as the director of the academic program. It was there that she met her husband, Ernst-Christian Kluge. Since their marriage three years ago they have enjoyed a cross-continental relationship. They visit each other often and sometimes meet at points in between. A recent destination—Iceland. “Why Iceland? It was sort of half way,” she said.

Though the anthology will soon be published, the project is far from completed. “When one finds the thread and follows it,” she said, “one begins to see how much there is to do. And there is some urgency, because materials are disappearing. These writers are important ‘other witnesses’ to our country’s history.”

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