

Monroe: A City in the Heart of Swissconsin

Hans Bernet



Turner Hall in Monroe, Wisconsin

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On May 6, 2023, the Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Max Kade Institute will take place in Monroe, Green County, Wisconsin, one of the state's centers of Swiss-German immigrant settlement. We invite you to join us at Monroe Turner Hall and for tours of the Green County Court House and the National Historic Cheesemaking Center. You can find a program and registration information on page 3.

While many readers are familiar with the history of German-speaking immigrants in Wisconsin, less widely known is that a sizable number of these German speakers were immigrants from Switzerland who came here from the mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries. The most recogniz-

able Swiss settlement in the state is New Glarus, but by the 1920s, there were more Swiss living in the city of Monroe than in New Glarus. Monroe, named for President James Monroe, is today both the county seat and, with 10,000 inhabitants, the largest community in Green County.

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Greetings Friends and Readers!

Some years ago, in preparing for an outreach presentation on the German language in Wisconsin, I created a map of Central Europe showing which German dialects were brought by 19th-century immigrants to the Badger State. As it happens, all major dialectal regions, from Low German in the north down to Central and Upper German, were represented, an expression of the profound regional and cultural diversity that characterized early Wisconsin German life.

An important part of that historical diversity was the settlement of German-speaking Swiss in Wisconsin, notably in Green County, as discussed in the lead article in this newsletter by longtime MKI Friend Hans Bernet. We are excited to join Hans and his fellow community members for our Friends Annual Meeting in Monroe on May 6. While active knowledge of Swiss German has receded in Wisconsin, Swiss migrants have left an indelible imprint on our state, not least through the cheesemaking industry, as Hans's article underscores.

Aside from our upcoming Annual Meeting, another highlight of this spring will be an exhibit we are creating on the history of German-American singing societies, to coincide with the National Sängerfest 2023 planned for June 8–11 here in Madison. This gathering of German-American choral ensembles will be sponsored by the *Nord-Amerikanischer Sängerbund* (North American Singers Association), an

organization founded in 1848. As Antje Petty's article describes, singing societies were an important expression of civic engagement born of the *Vereinskultur* (club culture) brought by German-speaking immigrants to North America during the 19th and 20th centuries. Complementing our spring exhibit, which you will be able to view in our Library on the fourth floor of the University Club, April 3–June 30, will be an MKI Virtual Lecture on German-American singing societies by Prof. Heike Bungert, a North American historian from the University of Münster, on Wednesday, April 4. You can find more information on both our exhibit and Prof. Bungert's talk on page 14.

We are pleased that the improving public health situation has enabled us to resume in-person activities, such as our Friends Annual Meeting, as well as exhibits and presentations. At the same time, we are grateful for the technological ability to sponsor virtual events that reach a wider audience. Over the past few years we have been gratified that the attendance at several of our MKI Virtual Lectures has exceeded one hundred,

with people logging in from across North America and Europe. Our virtual workshop, "Learn to Read the Old German Script," which will take place on Saturday, March 25, is another example of how we are expanding the reach of our work at MKI. We look forward to continuing to sponsor virtual events as a complement to our in-person programming into the future.

Thank you, dear Friends, for the many ways you support our work. We hope to see many of you at our Annual Meeting and at other events this year!

With gratitude,
Mark

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**Friends of the Max Kade Institute
ANNUAL MEETING 2023
Monroe, Green County, Wisconsin
Sunday, May 6, 2023**

Join us for the 2023 annual meeting of the Friends of the Max Kade Institute in Monroe, Green County, Wisconsin, located in the center of Swiss-German immigration and culture in the state. We will hold our meeting at the historic Turner Hall, where we will enjoy a Swiss buffet lunch in the Rathskeller Restaurant, followed by presentations on “The Swiss in Green County—Past and Present,” (Hans Bernet and Karen Fowdy) and “The Swiss Center of North America” (Greg Long) as well as a performance of Swiss traditional music. Our day will continue with rotating private tours of the National Historic Cheesemaking Center (museum guides) and the Historic Green County Courthouse and Square (docent Noreen Rueckert). Friends who wish to stay a little longer are invited to an informal gathering at Baumgartner’s Cheese Store and Tavern afterwards.

- 11:00–12:00 **Turner Hall**, 1217 17th Ave, Monroe, Wisconsin
- Registration
 - Annual Business Meeting of the Friends (cheese trays, beverages, cash bar)
- 12:00–12:15 Socializing; Board of Directors Meeting (election of officers)
- 12:15–1:00 Swiss Buffet Lunch
- 1:00–2:30 Program at Turner Hall
- 3:00–5:00 Tours
- **National Historic Cheesemaking Center**, 2108 6th Ave, Monroe
 - **Historic Green County Courthouse and Square**
1016 16th Ave, Monroe
- after 5:00 Informal gathering at **Baumgartner’s Cheese Store and Tavern**, 1023 16th Ave, Monroe

COST

Tours: \$8

Lunch Buffet per person: \$30

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED by Friday, April 21, 2023
Please register online at: <https://mkifriends.org/annual-meetings/>

BRING A FRIEND – MAKE A FRIEND

Dinner purchase includes Friends of the MKI membership for the year 2023 for new Friends.

Questions? Contact Antje Petty: apetty@wisc.edu

From Rags to Archives' Riches: Exploring Utopian Ambitions in Ohio's Early German-Language Newspapers

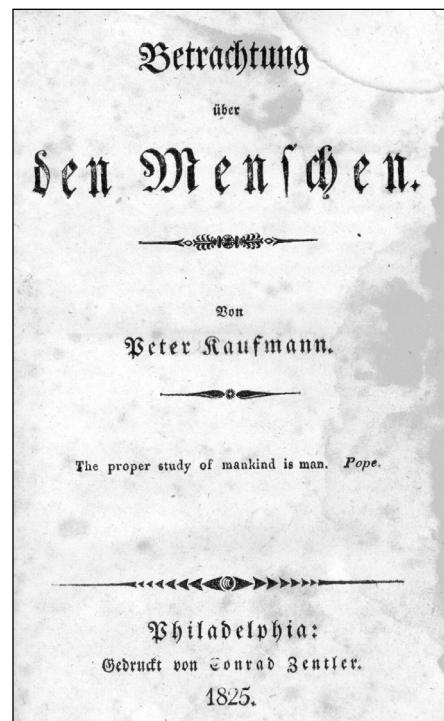
Randi Ramsden

Immigrants arriving in the United States in the 19th century came for a variety of reasons. Economic hardships, limited political rights, and religious persecution pushed them to seek better opportunities across the Atlantic, where many found their place in a rapidly expanding patchwork of settlements. For some, integrating into the emerging economic and cultural landscape was not the goal; instead, they strove to construct an alternative way of life: a utopia. Utopian societies were founded by groups of people sharing social, political, and/or religious ideals that aimed to create communal, often self-sufficient, environments in seclusion from mainstream culture. As industrialization continued to increase the pace of life and emphasize productivity, labor, class, and profit, communities such as these hoped to offer an alternative path with a focus on equity.

In 1827, one of these utopian societies was established by German immigrants in Ohio. Compared to the Harmony Society in Pennsylvania which inspired it, the Society of United Germans in Teutonia—not to be confused with the pro-Nazi Free Society of Teutonia, formed in 1924—is less well known but nonetheless interesting to examine. Little can be found online about the small, short-lived community, however, and it did not leave much of a mark in the contemporary geography of the state. Artist, writer, and educator Katherine

Cunningham attempted to find material evidence of Teutonia as part of her 2016 photo series of utopias [<https://katherinecunningham.net/>], but her search was unsuccessful. There is nothing left of the settlement that one could visit today, and Cunningham's photo shows only a weed-covered hillside in Springfield Township, Columbiana County, Ohio.

Looking for records of the people involved brings a little more information to light: Peter Kaufmann, one of the founding members and leaders, came to Pennsylvania in 1820, where he dabbled in business ventures and then completed his ministerial studies. He was in his twenties when he published his theological work *Betrachtung über den Menschen* (Contemplation of Humankind), a copy of which can be found in the MKI library. Interested in ways to improve the human condition, Kaufmann spent some time with George Rapp and his followers, who had established utopian societies in Harmony and Economy (Pennsylvania) and New Harmony (Indiana) after having fled religious persecution in Germany. In 1827, Kaufmann and a group of 18 others started their own commune in eastern Ohio. The principles were similar to the Rappist societies although not as conservative as they did not encourage celibacy or discourage marriage. In the constitution of the Society of United Germans in Teutonia, members agreed



Title page from Kaufmann's 1825 *Betrachtung über den Menschen*, MKI Library & Archives

to contribute all of their assets to the community for ten years. These resources were to be used to establish an egalitarian community promoting the welfare of all humans. The community planned to build its own educational institutions and share their religious convictions with all who were interested. Despite its good intentions, however, the commune did not make it to the planned ten-year mark. In 1831, Kaufmann moved to Canton, Ohio, and the community ceased to exist shortly thereafter.

More details about the workings of the short-lived community can likely be found in the Kaufmann papers housed at the archives of the Ohio History Connection, but there is an-



Masthead of *Der Vaterlandsfreund* from August 2, 1834. Source: *Chronicling America*

other resource offering insights into Teutonia. After leaving, Kaufmann began working as a printer and editor and soon purchased the newspaper *Der Vaterlandsfreund und Westliche Beobachter*. The publication had been, under varying titles, the first German-language newspaper in Canton. For Kaufmann it turned out to be an opportunity to share his convictions influenced by Hegelian and Jacksonian philosophies, as well as his German background. The newspaper, which was published under a number of different titles, including *Der Vaterlandsfreund* (1833–1836, 1845–1846), *Der Vaterlandsfreund und Westliche Beobachter* (1836–1837), and *Der Vaterlandsfreund und Geist der Zeit* (1837–1845), has been digitized by the Ohio History Connection and is available in *Chronicling America*.

Searching for articles mentioning Teutonia brings up a lengthy statement providing the editor's perspective on Teutonia on August 2, 1834. The article was published in response to allegations made by the editor of a rival newspaper, *Der Emigrant* of Columbus, Ohio (1832–1834). The rival editor had questioned the nature of Kaufmann's departure from the Economy community in Pennsylvania and had alleged that

the “Teutonischer Peter” embezzled Teutonia funds. *Der Vaterlandsfreund* followed up with a description of Kaufmann's utopian ambitions and actions. The statement detailed his efforts to understand the human condition on earth, and his realization that the worst hardships people experienced were put upon them by others, owing to the fact that humans were, first and foremost, governed by money. Investigating an alternative way of life, he visited the Economy community where Rapp suggested he build a Pestalozzi educational facility. After staying, learning, and teaching for 14 months, he decided to leave and form the Society of United Germans in Teutonia, in which he hoped to implement aspects of Rapp's vision he approved of, along with some changes he thought important. According to *Der Vaterlandsfreund*, the end of Teutonia was caused by financial hardship. The Society had underestimated the cost of their plans to establish a truly self-sufficient utopia and soon suffered remarkable financial losses. The newspaper claimed Kaufmann had not embezzled any funds but had rather taken on the debt during arbitration to insure an honorable end to the failed vision that was Teutonia.

Like other utopian societies at the

time, the Society of United Germans in Teutonia came to an end but the ideas it was founded on did not. Kaufmann continued to write about philosophy and religion. He later became active in politics, introducing the ideals and experience of the utopian community into the mainstream political realm. *Der Vaterlandsfreund* and similar publications reflect the hopes these German immigrants had for their new life in the United States, documenting the philosophical ideals and religious and political ambitions that guided their efforts to create better ways for humans to live. As record keepers of their times, newspapers help researchers to uncover the forgotten history of small communities, and show how they impacted the larger societal landscape around them. 

Sängerfests – The Festivals of German-American Singing Societies

Antje Petty

“Though much is being talked and written about the German national festivals just now, especially about the Saengerfest in this city, nobody but the Germans themselves seem to understand the nature and character of these festivities.”

Thus remarked the *New York Herald* on July 18, 1865, in the midst of the ninth singing festival organized by the *Nordöstlicher Sängerbund* (Singing Society of the Northeast), held July 15–20, 1865, in New York City. Thirty-four clubs from New York and fifty more from surrounding states participated in the event, bringing over 2,300 German-singing participants—most members of *Männerchors* (choirs for male voices)—and several thousand visitors to the city. Festival days were filled with concerts, parades, singing competitions, speeches, and social gatherings. The last day featured a grand procession along Broadway, followed by what the *New York Times* called a “monster picnic at Jones Wood.”¹

The 1865 New York City *Sängerfest* was by no means unique. From the first such festival in Cincinnati in 1849, they were held all over the United States, culminating in many even larger events by the turn of the century. But what was their nature, character, and history?

The first American *Männerchor* was founded by German-speaking immigrants in Philadelphia in 1835. Two



Greeting from the *Nordstern* newspaper to participants of the 1908 *Sängerfest* held in La Crosse, Wisconsin, “the birthplace of the Singing Association of the Northwest.”

years later, the Baltimore *Liederkrantz* was founded, and in 1838, it became the first German-American singing society to admit women singers to form a mixed voice choir. With more immigrants arriving in the late 1840s and early 1850s, new singing societies popped up in German communities across the country. Suzanne Snyder, in her extensive study of the German-American *Männerchor* phenomenon,² counts 950 German-American male choirs between 1835 and 1960. Some had few members and were short-lived, others are still in existence today, such as the Madison (Wis.) *Männerchor*.³

New York City's first singing society was the *Liederkrantz*, founded in 1847. That same year, the *Männerquartett*

and the *Sozialer Männerverein* were formed in Milwaukee; they soon merged into the *Milwaukee Männerchor*. Other singing societies followed, such as the “Singing Club of German Workers” (1848), the highly trained choir of Milwaukee’s *Musikverein* (1850), and the “Singers of the Free-thinker Congregation” (1852).

Not all members sang. Some dues-paying members did not perform music, but they attended and helped organize performances and other social events, including picnics, balls, and summer excursions.

While all groups shared a love for singing German songs, there were distinct differences between them. As Christopher G. Ogburn points out,⁴ factors such as regional affiliation,

social consciousness, and economic status often predicated society membership. In New York City, for example, the *Liederkrantz* and the *Arion* charged substantial membership fees, soon becoming clubs for the city's German-American elites, with members including William Steinway (scion of the famous piano factory), Carl Schurz (U.S. senator and Secretary of the Interior), and Oswald Ottendorfer (editor of the *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung*).

Another difference between the singing clubs was the musical training of their members, and thus the repertoires they practiced. For some groups the main purpose was to meet and sing together. They preferred arrangements of well-known tunes and folk songs. Other clubs had professional soloists among their members and performed challenging pieces from classical works.

But all enjoyed visiting with other groups to sing. The first regional singing association, the *Nordamerikanischer Sängerbund*, was founded in Cincinnati in 1849; its first American *Sängerfest* took place the same year in that city. The *Nordöstlicher Sängerbund*, founded in Philadelphia in 1850, brought together German-American choirs from the Eastern seaboard.

The *Sängerbund des Nordwestens* (Singing Association of the Northwest), founded in La Crosse in 1866, was the first in the Upper Midwest. At the time, it had seven member groups hailing from La Crosse, Watertown, Portage, Bangor, and Waumandee, Wisconsin; as well as Brownsville in Minnesota and Lansing in Iowa. Their first *Sängerfest* was held in La Crosse in July 1866. In the following years,



Delegations from German-American singing societies march in the 10th *Deutsche Sängerbundfest* parade, Vienna, 1928

Source: Deutsches Bundesarchiv, Wikimedia, Bild 102-06270

the *Sängerbund* expanded steadily until by the time of its 15th *Sängerfest*, held July 8–12, 1891, in Milwaukee, the association had swelled to 42 participating singing societies with thousands of singers.⁵ A special “Milwaukee Festival Choir” was created consisting of nearly 1,000 members from Milwaukee singing societies, and over 2,000 children “from public schools” formed the “Milwaukee Children’s Choir.” A special “Festival Orchestra” and famous soloists like Marie Ritter-Goetze rounded out the musical offerings. The concerts had “grand choirs” of up to 2,000 singers on stage and about 4,000 people in the audience. Musical selections ranged from famous opera choirs to traditional German folk songs, and compositions by German-American composers especially written for these grand choirs, including several by Milwaukee’s own Hugo Kaun.

At some festivals, especially those organized by the Singing Association of the Northeast, singing contests were popular. Participating choirs,

except those from the hosting city, competed for increasingly valuable prizes, such as grand pianos.

These singing events existed in the context of other German-American festival traditions, like the *Turnfests* organized by German-American gymnast clubs, or *Schützenfests* organized by sport-shooting clubs. As expressions of the *Vereinskultur* (club culture) that German-speaking immigrants brought with them, *Sängerfests* served not only as opportunities to show off skills, but also to meet, to speak German, and to recreate a sense of *Heimat*. They also allowed the German-American community to showcase German traditions and (musical) accomplishments—sometimes with a touch of cultural superiority—to their fellow Americans.

While in many cities the larger population watched *Sängerfest* processions and parades, the concerts were mostly attended by German Americans. Some non-German citizens welcomed the influx of the singers and out-of-town guests, if only for economic reasons;

others were not so enamored. Some voiced unhappiness about festivals taking place on Sundays, and decried the consumption of alcohol, reinforcing stereotypes about German Americans. Others questioned the patriotism of fellow citizens who insisted on singing only in German. A day after the 1865 *Sängerfest* in New York, for example, the *New York Times* wrote, “There is no use in disguising the fact. Yesterday was a grand old drink for one and all. [...] Song and mirthfulness characterized the entire proceedings. [...] There have been a few mistakes. [...] They omitted to open their master picnic with the ‘Star Spangled Banner,’ which would have been in eminent good taste—and, perhaps, some of our friends in their anxiety to have a good time, forgot that there was anybody else in the city beside themselves; but what are these little forgetfulnesses and mistakes in a festival extending through five mortal days?”⁶

Organizing the large festivals was a herculean task, logistically and financially, and the events did not always turn out as planned. A regional *Sängerfest* in Chicago in 1857 was completely rained out, and many large singing festivals ended in financial loss, including the 1891 *Sängerfest* in Milwaukee. The *Manitowoc* [Wisconsin] *Pilot* reported that “[t]he Saengerfest in Milwaukee last week was a financial failure, and the committee is having an interesting time trying to adjust matters properly.”⁷

All the while, German-American singing societies kept strong connections with singers in German-speaking Europe. If they could afford it, choirs even traveled across the Atlantic to participate in each other’s

festivals.

As times changed, the singing associations had to adapt. No festivals were held during the Civil War years, with the 1865 *Sängerfest* in New York being the first to take place after the war. At that time it stood out for inviting German choirs from Virginia. No festivals were held after the United States entered the First World War, until the Chicago *Sängerfest* in 1924, nor did any occur during the Second World War. In the second half of the 20th century, the number of German singing societies and their membership declined drastically. Their repertoire shrank, too, focusing on popular songs about the beauty of nature and (European) locales, a longing for *Heimat*, Christmas carols, and social and drinking songs.

In the 21st century, the number of singing societies with a German-American origin has remained stable, with membership rising in some cases. National *Sängerfests* are still held every three years, and Milwaukee hosted one in 2013. The Wisconsin chapter of the North American Singing Association currently has six member choruses: *Concordia Gesangverein* Sheboygan, *Freier Sängerbund* Manitowoc, Madison *Männerchor*, *MGV Harmonia* Kenosha, Milwaukee *D.A.N.K. Chor*, and

the Milwaukee *Liederkrantz*. However, many society members do not speak German, and some choirs now include a repertoire of English-language songs. Still bearing their original German names, today’s singing societies not only reflect their German-American heritage, but have become part of a broader local and regional culture that in itself is uniquely American. 

From June 8 to 11, 2023, the 64th National *Sängerfest* of the *Nord-Amerikanischer Sängerbund* will be held in Madison, Wisconsin (see: <https://na-saengerbund.org/saengerfest-2023>). In conjunction, the Max Kade Institute will curate a special exhibit, April 3–June 30, 2023, showcasing materials from our own collections and those of the Mills Music Library at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. On April 4, there will be a virtual lecture by Prof. Heike Bungert titled “‘Wo man singt.’ German-American Singing Festivals, 1849–1914.” For details, see page 13.

NOTE

The following texts have been quoted and consulted. A special *thank you* to Geoffrey M. Kroening, Secretary of the Wisconsin *Sängerbezirk* for information on the history of Wisconsin’s singing societies.

¹ “The German Saengerfest. Proceedings of the Last Day,” *New York Times*, July 20, 1865.

² Snyder, Suzanne Gail. “The Männerchor

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The Newsletter of the Friends of the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies is published three times a year at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Submissions are invited and should be sent to:

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The first Euro-American settlers in the area, mostly Yankees from New England and New York, began arriving around 1835 after the discovery of lead in the region. In addition to mining, early settlers were attracted to the rich farmlands and river ways, including the Sugar and Pecatonica rivers.

In 1845, the Canton Glarus in Switzerland established an Emigration Society with the sole purpose of resettling some of its impoverished citizens in America. Scouts sent by the Canton found suitable land in what is now northern Green County, and in the following year, 200 Swiss established a settlement they called New Glarus about 15 miles north of Monroe.

More European immigrants ar-



Photo by Corey Coyle, Creative Commons

Green County Courthouse in Monroe, Wisconsin



Photo by Bobbie Bernet

National Historic Cheesemaking Center, Monroe, Wisconsin

rived in the area in the 1860s, especially in Monroe. Once again, many came from German-speaking Switzerland, but this time mostly from Canton Bern. The dairying knowledge that these Swiss settlers brought with them was crucial to a shift away from unprofitable wheat farming then practiced in the area toward sustainable dairy agriculture in the late 1800s. The rise of the dairy and cheesemaking industries in Monroe helped foster the city's prosperity and made it famous as the "Swiss Cheese Capital of the United States." At one time in the 1920s and 1930s, Monroe boasted several "cheese millionaires." Today, the community's Swiss heritage is still visible in the local architecture and in the strength of its cheesemaking industry.

In 1882, the City of Monroe was incorporated. The Green County Courthouse, completed in 1891, is the center of Monroe's Historic

Square surrounded by a thriving commercial district. In addition to dozens of events and festivals, Monroe hosts Green County Cheese Days, one of the oldest and largest festivals in the Midwest, held in even-numbered years on the third weekend of September.

The rich history of cheesemaking in Monroe, Wisconsin, and the Midwest is told at the National Historic Cheesemaking Center. It is housed in a restored railroad depot, which in earlier times was regularly filled with Green County cheese awaiting rail transport to Chicago and all over the United States. The center features cheesemaking equipment, dairy farming heritage, cheese factory replicas, railroad memorabilia, and local history. The center also includes a restored turn-of-the-century farmstead cheese factory, the type of small factory that was once common throughout Wisconsin and



Photo by Michael Pecosky, used with permission

Green County Cheese Days, 2016

Illinois. Furthermore, several times each year, retired cheesemakers team with master cheesemakers to make a 90-pound wheel of Swiss cheese as it was done over a century ago, using

the factory's original equipment. Cheesemaking continues to be strong in Green County to this day. Of the many graduates from the University of Wisconsin's national Master Cheesemaker Certificate Program, most reside in Wisconsin, with a large concentration in Green County.

Although the last major wave of Swiss immigration to south-central Wisconsin ended in the 1950s, the influence of the Swiss throughout Green County is still strongly felt and seen today. One of the most visible and still viable evidences of the Swiss is the Turner Hall of Monroe. Turner Hall derives its name from the German word for gymnast, *Turner*. The first *Turnhalle* was built by Swiss immigrants in 1868 on the same site as the current Turner Hall. Originally a place for the Swiss to practice gymnastics and preserve their Swiss traditions, it soon became a center of community activities and was often referred to as the "Opera House." For

many years local elections took place here.

On Labor Day of 1936, the original structure burned to the ground after a dance. The members vowed to rebuild, and almost immediately plans were made to build the current Turner Hall. Designed by German-born architect Max Hanisch, and despite the economic depression at the time, the hall was completed in 1938. While there are many German Turner Halls throughout the country, it is believed that the Turner Hall of Monroe is the only remaining one of Swiss origin in the United States. The building itself, a Swiss Emmentaler-style chalet, has been listed on both the National and State Registers of Historic Places since 1982. Its authentically Old-World interior houses many irreplaceable paintings and Swiss artifacts as well as fine examples of *Bauernmalerei* (Swiss

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**Poem above main entrance of
Turner Hall**

Swiss Bernese dialect

Das isch die neu Schwyzerhalle,
Mir hoffe sie wir Allne gfalle.
Mir hei sie baut u heis la choste,
Das 'Schwyzertum nie söll verroste

Standard German

Das ist die neue Schweizerhalle,
Wir hoffen, sie wird allen gefallen.
Wir haben sie gebaut und haben es
uns kosten lassen,
Dass das Schweizertum nie verrostet

English

This is the new Swiss Hall,
We hope it pleases all,
We built it and willingly paid its cost,
That Swiss heritage should never rust.

Building MKI's *Published in America Collection*: The Process from Acquisition and Catalog Entry to a Place on the Shelf

JoAnn Tiedemann

A new item for the MKI Library & Archives! Each one brings a sense of excitement and curiosity. Each one also requires a sequence of decisions and actions before it can take its proper place in the collection and become accessible to our library patrons.

New acquisitions overwhelmingly arrive as donations, although the library is currently purchasing some materials with a Library Collections Enhancement Initiative grant supported by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education (OVCRGE), with support from the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF).

Books

When a book arrives, the first step is to examine it for appropriateness: is it something that fits the MKI collection criteria, the most relevant of which is “published in America in the German language?” [See below for more information.] Secondly, consideration is given to the condition of the item.

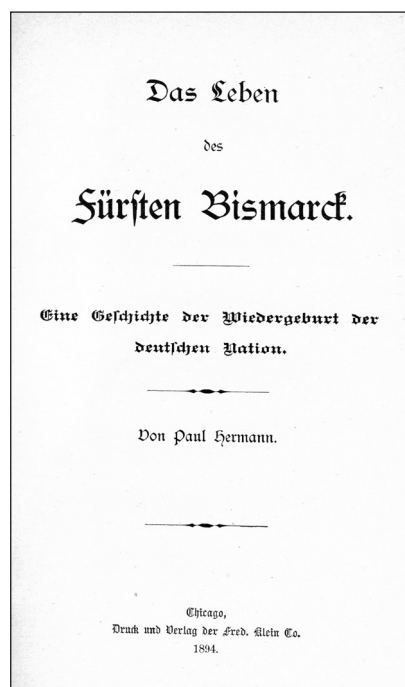
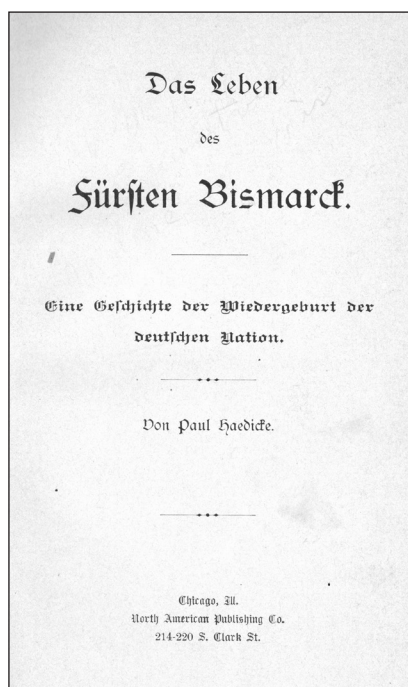
Once these two main criteria have been satisfied, searches are conducted in the MKI database <<https://mkifriends.org/max-kade-institute/library-search/>> to see if the item is already owned, in the UW General Library System catalog to see if it exists elsewhere in the system, and to be thorough, the designated location on the MKI collection shelf is checked to see if something is already there.

This sounds simple enough, but in reality the decision what to include and what not can be complicated. For example: under what circumstances should reprints, multiple editions, or content-relevant English language documents be included?

But the fun truly begins when the cataloger is confronted with a mystery. One example is a recently purchased copy of *Das Leben des Fürsten Bismarck: eine Geschichte der Wiedergeburt der deutschen Nation*, by Paul Haedicke, published in Chicago by the North American Publishing Co. in 1894. A search in the MKI database for “Haedicke” showed no copy of this title. However, a second search in the MKI database for the title with the u-umlaut spelled out

(*Das Leben des Fuersten Bismarck...*) retrieved a record for a book with the identical title, authored by a Paul Hermann, and published in Chicago by Fred. Klein Co., 1894. That book is on the shelf, has a drab gray cover with a silver embossed script “Bismarck,” and is identical in every way to the newly-purchased book from the back of the title page to the concluding page 382!

What is behind the two different author names? Intriguing as the answer might be, researching this particular puzzle must be left to others. Meanwhile, the accessioning process will be completed with the creation of a record for the Haedicke/North American Pub. Co. acquisition in the MKI database, adding a new



Left: Title page from the North American Publishing work by Paul Haedicke
Right: Title page from the Ferd. Klein publication by Paul Hermann

record to the UW General Library System catalog, creating a call number label to identify the book on the shelf, and shelving it where it belongs (approximately one shelf distant from the Herrmann/Klein edition.)

Newspapers and Magazines

The accessioning process for newspapers and magazines published in North America in the German language is similar to that for books. Here, however, the record will also be checked against the Wisconsin Historical Society database. Because of the fragile state of many of these items, MKI tends to keep duplicates only if they are in excellent condition.

Looking at the content of German-American newspapers and magazines, it is often difficult if not impossible to discern where an item originated, as it was common among publishers to copy articles from other German-language papers in America and in Europe. In some cases, con-

tributions were translations from English language sources. Attribution and credit were very rarely given in either case. Advertisements were frequently placed in German, English, or both. Occasionally, different companies used the same or similar templates with stock images, or one company used the same advertising format for different items.

An intriguing example (see article in the Winter 2016-2017 issue of the “MKI Friends Newsletter,” <https://mki.wisc.edu/mki-newsletter/>) are ads from a Milwaukee company selling *Kunst-Kaffee* (substitute coffee) in 1915, and then *echter Kaffee* (real coffee) directly from the plantation in Brazil in early 1918 (i.e., even before World War I had ended). The address for the companies selling these two beverages is the same, but the company name changed. Furthermore, the two owners in the earlier ads were men, but by 1917 they were women—with the same last names as

the previously listed men. Were these war widows or early entrepreneurial women, and how did they have a direct connection to Brazil during wartime?

Who Is the Author?

One frequent challenge is the identity of the author. While this is not a problem unique to German-American publications, anglicizations and spelling variations can add to the confusion. Many authors wrote under pseudonyms, sometimes more than one. In the magazine and newspaper world, publishers were known to write articles and editorials in their own publications under different aliases. Sometimes the author was easy to identify, such as the writer Edna Fern, whose real name was Fernande Richter. In other cases, the author remained a mystery — at least for a while. As an example, see the article by MKI Librarian Kevin Kurdylo in the Summer 2004 “MKI Friends Newsletter.” It concerns “K.M.S.” whom we now know to be Kurt M. Stein, a German-American writer of the early 20th century who emigrated from Germany and moved to Chicago in 1895, where he was the president of a wholesale leather company. K.M.S. employed “a form of dialect poetry that mixed German words and grammatical structure with English loan words and idiomatic phrases.” The MKI Library includes several of his books, including *Die schönste Lengevitch* and *Gemixte Pickles*. For those wishing to delve further, the Newberry Library in Chicago holds an archival collection of Kurt M. Stein’s correspondence, poetry, plays, and other writings.



Left: Cover from the North American Publishing work by Paul Haedicke
Right: Cover from the Ferd. Klein publication by Paul Hermann

2023 Spring Events at the Max Kade Institute

[all times are Central Daylight Time]

March 25 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Virtual Workshop: “Learn to Read the Old German Script”

with Mark L. Loudon and Antje Petty, Max Kade Institute at UW–Madison
Learn strategies for deciphering letters and words in *Kurrent*, the most commonly used old German script.

Additional information and registration details: <https://mki.wisc.edu/event/virtual-workshop-learn-to-read-the-old-german-script/>

April 3–June 30 Hours vary! Please contact the Institute before visiting.

Exhibit: “Sängerfeste — A German-American Tradition”

Location: Max Kade Institute Library

The exhibit displays and interprets materials about German-American singing societies from the collections of the Max Kade Institute and Mills Music Library at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Additional information: <https://mki.wisc.edu/event/exhibit-sangerfeste-a-german-american-tradition/>

April 4 12:00 pm

Virtual Lecture: “*Wo man singt*—German-American Singing Festivals, 1849–1914

with Heike Bungert, University of Münster, Germany

Learn about the origins and rise of German-American singing societies, especially *Männerchöre*, choirs for male voices.

Additional information and registration details: <https://mki.wisc.edu/event/virtual-lecture-wo-man-singt-german-american-singing-festivals-1849-1914/>

April 27–29

47th Annual Symposium of the Society for German-American Studies

Location: Alexandria, Virginia

The Max Kade Institute is co-organizer of this year’s Symposium of the SGAS, featuring over 40 presentations on a variety of German-American topics.

Additional information and registration details: <https://sgas.org/sgas-47th-annual-symposium-registration-and-information/>

May 6 11:00 am–5:00 pm

Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Max Kade Institute

Location: Turner Hall, Monroe, Wisconsin

Annual business meeting of the Friends of the Max Kade Institute with lectures, entertainment, food, and tours, focusing on Swiss-German history and culture in Wisconsin. New members welcome!

Information and registration details: <https://mkifriends.org/annual-meetings/>

Donations of Materials to the MKI Library

The MKI Library and Archives are made up almost entirely of donations. In addition to the publications mentioned above, we appreciate other printed materials such as flyers, brochures, trade catalogs, anniversary booklets and much more. We also collect family histories and primary unpublished documents such as diaries, journals, letters, or other family papers produced by German-speaking immigrants and their descendants, which detail the experiences of such immigrants in America. You will find a complete list of items we are looking for here: <https://mki.wisc.edu/support-the-max-kade-institute/donate-materials-to-the-library/>. 

JoAnn Tiedemann is a retired librarian and German teacher. She is an Honorary Associate at the Max Kade Institute Library and Archives.

Grimm Bindery Repairs More Books from MKI's Collections

Kevin Kurdylo

Thanks to a new donation-match campaign sponsored by the MKI Friends, the Library was able to have additional books from its collections receive repairs and conservation work at Grimm Book Bindery, Monona, Wisconsin (see also: “Restoration and Conservation of MKI Library and Archival Materials,” MKI Friends Newsletter, Spring 2021, vol. 30, no. 2).

Images of the restoration process were kindly provided by the skilled craftspeople at Grimm's.

We remain grateful to the Friends of the MKI for all their efforts—past, present, and future—to preserve the history and stories of Germans in America. 🍷

Note: The PräForm is a book press and joint-setting machine, manufactured by the Hamburg-based Schmedt bookbinding company. “Prä” would refer to the German verb, *prägen*, meaning to emboss, as on a book cover. Schmedt also offers the PräDeck, designed to produce hardcover cases for books (*Buchdeckel* in German), the PräziEdge (*präzise* meaning precise) a printer for creating filigree and subtle patterns on book edges, and yes, the PräGnant, which is a manual block-ing press. In German, *prägnant* means “concise.”



Above: Two of the books repaired by Grimm Bindery. One is Gustaf Zimmermann's *Deutsch in Amerika. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Deutsch-Amerikanischen Literatur* (Chicago: Eyler & Co., 1894), which was compiled under the auspices of Chicago's Germania Männerchor. The foreword claims the book is a “poetic historical picture of German-Americanism, and should not be missing from any hearth where the familiar sounds of the German mother tongue can be heard.”

The other book, bound and wrapped as its repaired cover dries, is *Das Weisse Haus Kochbuch* (Chicago : R.S. Peale, 1891), a translation of *The White House Cookbook*, by F. L. Gillette and Hugo Ziemann. Ziemann was White House steward and a renowned chef, born in Braunschweig, Germany.

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folk painting) by local artist Janeen Babler, who honed her craft in Switzerland.

Over the years, many prominent Americans visited Monroe Turner Hall, including Susan B. Anthony, William Jennings Bryan, John F. Kennedy, and—from the entertainment world—Wayne King, Tiny Hill, and Lawrence Welk.

Today, the Old-World Ratskeller restaurant at Turner Hall and the recently restored grand hall and stage serve local and regional communities. Run largely by volunteers and local sponsors, the Swiss Heritage Series offers regular events such as Squeezebox Night, the Monroe Swiss Singers' Swissfest, and Alpine Candle Tree-Lighting and Carol Singing, to name a few. For a list of events and a detailed history of the building go to <http://www.turnerhallofmonroe.org/>.

Whether your interest is in immigration history, architecture, preserving old-world traditions, or just good cheese and beer, we know you will enjoy your visit to Monroe for the Annual Meeting of the Friends of Max Kade on May 6, 2023. 

Hans Bernet, a resident of Monroe, is a longtime member of the Friends of the Max Kade Institute and a former member of the Board of Directors. He is the son of Swiss immigrants from the Berner Oberland near Interlaken. His mother, Martha Bernet, broadcast a daily program of Swiss and German folk music for 60 years over WEKZ in Monroe.

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Tradition in the United States: A Historical Analysis of Its Contribution to American Musical Culture." The University of Iowa, 1991.

³ For a history of the Madison *Männerchor* see an article by Günther Ruch in the Winter 2015–2016 issue of the Max Kade Institute Newsletter: <https://mki.wisc.edu/mki-newsletter/>

⁴ Ogburn, Christopher G. "Brews, Brotherhood, and Beethoven: The 1865 New York City *Sängerfest* and the Fostering of German American Identity." *American Music* 33.4 (2015): 405–440.

⁵ *Souvenir des 15. Sängesfestes des Sängerbundes des Nordwesten*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1891.

⁶ "The Saengerfest. The Last Scene of the Last Day," *The New York Times*, July 21, 1865.

⁷ *Manitowoc Pilot*, July 30, 1891.

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Please make checks payable to the *Friends of the Max Kade Institute*, 432 East Campus Mall, Madison, WI 53706-1407.
Or pay your membership online at <http://mkifriends.org/membership/>

- *Friends of the Max Kade Institute* is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization that supports the research, outreach, educational, and publishing activities of the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies.
- Membership covers the calendar year (January–December). Payments received after November 1 of the current year will be credited for the full succeeding year.

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