

May / June 2018

President's Message

100 YEARS AGO, WE WERE THE "OTHER"

May 2, 2018 marks the 100th anniversary of an event that happened in San Jose and came to a climax in St James Park. On the night of May 1, 1918, a German Immigrant Georg Koetzer, an employee of the Fredericksburg Brewing Company (1889-1918), was forcibly removed from his living quarters, given a "trial" by the "Knights of Liberty" thugs who kidnapped him, condemned to be hanged along with another kidnapped German American, Oakland tailor H. Steinmolz. Steinmolz was hanged but lowered upon becoming unconscious, subsequently tied to a tree, then taken away by the Knights of Liberty. Nothing of his future has been recorded. Georg was tarred, feathered, and found by local authorities on the early morning of May 2nd in St James Park, chained to the cannon of President William McKinley's monument, less than a 5 minute walk from our current Germania Verein clubhouse. Why? According to the ACLU and the California newspapers of May 2, 1918, their crime was "alleged disloyalty", suspected of being pro-German or expressing pro-German sentiments. But they were lucky! Earlier, on April 4th, German immigrant Robert Prager was lynched in Collinsville, Illinois, for similar reasons.

At that time, in the United States, Germans were the largest immigrant group and the largest group of non-English speakers. It was a time of seemingly ubiquitous Karnevals, Sangerfests, Schutzenfests, and Turnfests. Many viewed Germans of all backgrounds as an alien and arrogant community, seemingly resisting assimilation, purportedly viewing their culture superior, with a "hidden agenda" of establishing an American form of Deutschtum in the United States. German-Americans marched in uniformed brass bands, sang, shot rifles, even drank in public with their spouses! German speaking peoples also brought Socialism and different forms of Jewish expression, including Reform Judaism initiated by Moses Mendelssohn and Zionism, established by Theodor Herzl and led by Chaim Weizmann to our shores. Even the clergy were suspect of "disloyalty" since German Baptist, Jewish, Lutheran, Methodist and Roman Catholic clergy often preached in the German language to effectively connect with, engage, and properly serve members of their faith communities.

The US and British governments portrayed the Germans as the "hated Hun", brutes, hyphenated-Americans, and generally disloyal. Everything "German" needed to be eliminated from the general culture. After America's entry into World War I, hospitals, streets, and anything containing "German" in its name were renamed. The X-ray device was first employed in America by the German Hospital in Philadelphia! Philadelphia's German Hospital was renamed Lakenau Hospital; New York's German Dispensary, Lenox Hill Hospital; New York's German Hospital, Wyckoff Heights Hospital; Chicago's German Hospital, Grant Hospital; our San Francisco's German Hospital, Franklin Hospital. Sauerkraut was renamed "Liberty Cabbage"; German Measles, "Liberty Measles"; Hamburgers, "Liberty sandwiches"; Dachshunds, "Liberty Pups". The two most common German surnames in America then and now were Müller and Schmidt; yet many quickly were changed to Miller and Smith during the anti-German hysteria of 1917-1918.

Of course, war hysteria is not rational and requires no foundation. It was seemingly irrelevant that the leader of our American Expeditionary Force (AEF) was none other than General of the Armies John Joseph "Black Jack" Pershing, a direct descendant of Fredrich Pforching/Pfersching/Pershing, born in Alsace and Elizabeth Weygandt, whose family came from Zweibrücken, Rhineland-Palatinate. Our top American Ace of World War I, Eddie Rickenbacher felt the need to change the "h" to "k" in his last name; he later earned the Congressional Medal of Honor for his gallantry above and beyond the call of duty. It was also irrelevant that our community's contributions to San Jose were deep and wide.

Unfortunately, our story is not an aberration or exception. Too many other immigrant groups experienced irrational discrimination as a result of war or other reasons. In the Bay Area, we can find no cultural or ethnic group who was immune. Indigenous First Americans have their own tails of tears. We are all too aware of our Japanese-American and Chinese-American neighbors who endured several episodes of overt discrimination, loss of property, and internment. African-Americans can justifiably lament

2018 Calendar

MAY

- 4 Membership Meeting
- 24 Spring Choir Concert

JUNE

- 1 Membership Meeting
- 10 Vasona Picnic

JULY

The club is closed.

AUGUST

- 3 Membership Meeting
- 12 Vienna Cafe

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their "middle passage" and state sanctioned years of bondage and Jim Crow Laws that followed. Many Mexican-Americans can cite how the "border crossed them, instead of their crossing the border" and others can point to the years of migrant farm labor under the most challenging of conditions.

Yet, all of us who are proud to be "hyphenated-Americans" can point to fact that when duty called, we responded. The fidelity and valor of hyphenated-Americans is recorded by history. When we were called to fight our ancestral lands, we understood that by birth or choice America was our homeland and claimed our first loyalty. Our response was as diverse as our people. Non-resistors, Amish, Mennonites and Quakers, carried no arms, but willing placed themselves in harm's way to help the wounded and dying on the battlefields. Four US Army chaplains, Dutch Reformed, Jewish, Methodist and Roman Catholic, comforted, encouraged, and prayed for soldiers and sailors on the torpedoed USAT Dorchester, gave away their own life jackets, and their lives, so others may live. The four chaplains were last seen linking arms and praying together as the Dorchester slipped under the waves. This is the America to whom our allegiance is owed and freely given.

As we celebrate Memorial Day, we all need to remember "Freedom isn't Free". We must remember the injustice done to Georg Koetzer and H. Steinmolz in our own back yard. Most of all, we need to remember the fidelity and valor of all Americans who served, often while experiencing injustice. Of them we can rightfully say "all gave some, some gave all".

Enjoy your Memorial Day holiday. I hope to see you and your family at our Germania Verein Picnic on Sunday, June 10 at Vasona Lake County Park, Los Gatos.

Carl Schmidt, President

Upcoming Events

Choir Spring Concert

DATE: Sunday, May 6, 2018

TIME: Doors open at 1:30 P.M.

ADMISSION: \$20 per person, includes coffee and cake

ENTERTAINMENT: Bill Bly Band

TICKETS: Call Hildegard Wehner 408.246.4644 or Edith Meyer 408.379.6540 or purchase from choir members

German Language Radio

The German Radio is a German language radio station located in the San Francisco Bay Area. The programs feature German music, news, and European topics, as well as German events. Visit them at www.thegermanradio.com to listen.

Picnic in Vasona Park

DATE: Sunday, June 10, 2018

TIME: Join us beginning at 11AM

LOCATION: Vasona Park, 333 Blossom Hill Rd, Los Gatos (last picnic area when you drive all the way up the hill on the right)

FOOD: Food and soft drinks provided by the club

ADMISSION: Free for members/\$10 donation for guests

FUN FOR THE FAMILY: Live accordion music. There will be games and prizes for children. Don't forget your sunshade or umbrella for your picnic table.

RESERVATIONS & INFORMATION: Contact Hildegard Wehner at 408.246.4644. We need a headcount to help us plan! Please RSVP by May 25.

Department News

Language

The Sprachabteilung meets the first Wednesday of each month upstairs in the Germania meeting room. Our next meeting is **WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, AT 7:30PM**. We will have some German conversation (all ability levels welcome) and start with introductions in German and we will challenge ourselves with a crossword puzzle ... in German of course!

Our main topic of discussion will be "Last Summer's Vacation". Come ready to share your memories. What was your favorite experience? Who did you travel with? How was the weather, the food, the hotel? Beer and soft drinks available for purchase and consumption on the 2nd floor with German Club drink tickets. Alcohol purchased from the restaurant on the 1st floor must remain on the 1st floor.

I will bring some snacks to share or bring your own. You can purchase food from the restaurant. Non-members are welcome to "check us out" up to 3 times before applying for membership. We can help you become a member if interested. Please consider \$1.00 per meeting donation to Abteilung

Albert Zimmermann

Dance Group

On March 9, Stephanie Tuma, Stephen Goth, Nancy Mast, and James Zimmerman performed at the Fairwood multicultural festival in Sunnyvale.

Our next three rehearsals at the Germania Hall will be at **8PM ON FRIDAY(S): APRIL 27, MAY 18, AND JUNE 22**. For more information on the dance group, please view us on Instagram: [instagram.com/germanclubdancegroup](https://www.instagram.com/germanclubdancegroup).

Auf gehts! Stephen Goth

Birthdays

May

Peter Heinze
 Pamela Sommer
 Frieda Schomann
 Walter G. Hecker
 Caroline Wolf
 Jutta Leidreiter
 David A. Wendt
 John Kreiser
 Werner Springer
 Michael Gottwald
 Laura Frazer
 Alfred Viereckl
 Shirley Koch
 Debra A. Wolf
 Gertrud Perhson
 Christopher Werle
 Radina Lueneburger
 Gerhard Beutelspacher
 Martina Keim



June

Hildegard Wehner
 Richard McKinney
 Karin Lele
 Steve Klesitz
 Ronald Wipfler
 René Claus
 Ulrike A. Kuehn
 Georg Kuestermann
 Roswitha Guzman
 Holli McCormick
 Douglas P. Davis

Club Contacts

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Newsletter

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German Pioneers

Learn about our German ancestors who have contributed to this area since 1841. Visit www.germanamericanpioneers.org or contact Maria Brand at 408.270.4888.

Germania
The German-American
Club of San Jose **Verein**

Choir

The choir is now busy practicing the program for our Spring Concert. We selected a new variety of songs to welcome the beautiful season of spring and to delight our audience. The concert is scheduled for May 6. Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased for \$20 from Hildegard Wehner (408.246.4644) and Edith Meyer (408.379.6540) or from any other Choir member. The doors will open at 1:30pm. We will serve coffee and cake after the concert.

Please mark your calendar and be our guest at this popular event. As always we should have a gemütlichen afternoon. Please note that parking across from the Hall is no longer available. The new parking lot is at 360 North First Street, San Jose.

Mit musikalischem Gruss, Manfred Trogisch

Music Ensemble

In the past we have met on Saturdays, but this has been inconvenient for some of us. We changed our practice time to **EVERY OTHER TUESDAY AT 6:30** before choir practice, stipulating we must utilize street parking. Our next meetings will be held May 8 and 22, and June 5 and 19.

Sam

Historical Society of Germania

I have some news! April assured me that the book is practically finished. She will come to my house, so I can see for myself and hopefully, give my approval.

A Germania member is interested in continuing my website that I started years ago. Her name is Pamela Sommer Lenz. She has a German radio program in the Bay area, for more than a year. She is a German lady who has a very nice family, which she brought and introduced to some members at the Schützenfest. We met last week, and my website is being transferred to her name.

I am 82 years old and feel it is time to turn all the historic information I have gathered, over to the next generation. I am happy that Pamela is eager to play an active part in the German community.

I sincerely hope that I can report something concrete about the book in the next newsletter.

Thank you, Maria Brand

Carnival

Hello to all of our carnival friends. We are on break until the next Karnival season 2018-2019.

Alaaf and Helau, Klaus Vorrath

Schützen

Our April 14 Schützenfest was a successful event. It was gratifying to have 90 Schützen and guests attending this annual event. Bill Blyth played for our entertainment and dancing pleasure.

On Saturday we crowned Cecilie Springer as the new Germania Schützen Queen. Reinhard Meier became our Vice King for the year. Werner Kahlen is the new King of Kings. All the best to our new royalty!

The Las Vegas men received the top score at the Sunday shooting. The San Jose shooters won the second and the Anaheim Schützen third place.

At the end of April, Cecilie and I attended the Schützenfest in Las Vegas. Our meetings and target shooting are on the **LAST SUNDAY OF MOST MONTHS** starting about **10:30 AM**. Guests are welcome.

Gut Schuß, Werner Springer

Kaffeeklatsch

Happy Mother's Day to all! We will celebrate next meeting **MAY 12 AND JUNE 9** with a potluck luncheon and hope you all bring your favorite dish. Parking is available at the law library. Edith gave a tour to some members to familiarize them with the location. See you on May 12.

Edith Meyer

Skat

We are still looking for players who want to play this fun German card game. Anyone, experienced or not, is welcome to join. We are meeting on the **THIRD TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 7:30PM** upstairs and hope to see you there.

Gut Blatt, Klaus Glimski

In Memoriam

Edith Davenport



Department Meetings

Carnival

Every 2nd Monday of the month at 10A.M.

Choir

Every Tuesday at 7:30P.M.

Dance Group

Last Friday of the month at 8P.M.

Hiking

No hikes scheduled presently.

Historical Society

Details coming soon.

Kaffeeklatsch

Every 2nd Saturday of the month at 12P.M.

Language Group

First Wednesday of month at 7:30P.M.

Skat

Every 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7:30P.M.

Schützen

Meetings are on the same day as the target shooting which is the last Sunday of the month at 10A.M.

Germania
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261 North 2nd Street
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Committee News

Sunshine

A big bouquet of "Sunny thoughts" to all our Germania Family members, not only our mothers; may these thoughts warm your hearts and spirit, knowing that we are sharing good and difficult times. Come to our upcoming functions, renew friendships and making our new Germania family members welcome. Several of our family members moved away, we will miss them, however wish them only the best. To our members who are not feeling well, a lot of "Sunshine".

*Jutta Kiel A single rose can be my garden,
a single friend, my world.*

Membership

A friendly reminder that your membership renewals are due! For questions, please contact Tricia. Also, we are sad to report the passing of our member, Edith Davenport. Our sincerest condolences to her family.

Tricia Nelson and Hermann Rehmeier

Aiello

After consultations with Heinz Wegener and Andrew Bach, the tenants appear to be satisfied. Our rents are at or near market value, they are paying between \$1.25 and \$1.37 per square foot or about \$7,900 per month for all three units. The next lease expiration will be in about a year. We have repaired the HVAC units and are not expecting any more major repairs or outlays.

Reinhard Wolf

Other News

The United German American Societies of San Francisco and Vicinity (UGAS) is an organization representing a network of German organizations in the Bay Area. Our representatives are Edith Meyer and Albert Zimmermann. UGAS meets every two months in San Francisco at the Concordia Club. Their main annual events are: Fall Banquet, Oktoberfest by the Bay (\$5 tickets), and Volkstrauertag.

The Volkstrauertag is in Colma, **NOVEMBER 18, 2018, AT 1:30PM** with dinner afterwards at the Concordia Club (must RSVP early). We usually have a good-sized group and this year we plan to attend the dinner.

Other main causes are supporting the German Heritage Soccer Night through sponsorship, benefactor of the seven Bay Area German Saturday Schools (GASANC), and the Deutschermusikverein, who will have a free Jubilee Konzert on **MAY 12, 2018 A 2PM**, St. Mark's San Francisco.

"Ohne Beruf"

"Ohne Beruf", so stand es im Paß,
Mir wurden fast die Augen naß.

"Ohne Beruf" stand da zu lesen,
Und sie ist doch das
nützliche Wesen.

Nur für andere zu sinnen,
zu sorgen,

Ist ihr Beruf vom frühen Morgen.
Bis in die Tiefe der kargen Nacht,
Nur für die Ihren wohl bedacht.

Gattin, Mutter, Hausfrau zu sein,
Schließt das nicht alle Berufe ein?

Als Köchin von allen
Lieblingsspeisen,

Als Packer, wenn es geht
auf Reisen;

Färber von alten Mänteln
und Röcken,

Finanzgenie, wenn sich
der Beutel soll strecken.

Als Lehrer, der schier alles
soll wissen,

Als Flickfrau, wenn Wäsche
und Strümpfe zerrissen.

Als Märchenerzählerin
ohne Ermüden,

Als Hüterin von des Hauses Frieden,

Als Pupp doktor, als Dekorateur,
Als Gärtner, Konditor und
als Friseur.

Unzählige Titel könnt ich
noch sagen,

Doch soll sich der Setzer
nicht länger plagen.

Von Frauen, die Gott zum
Segen erschuf,

Und das nennt die Welt
dann "ohne Beruf"!

(Eingesandt von Hans Eitel, Kelowna, B.C.)