



DANK Chapter 71 German Heritage Society of Erie Mitteilungsblatt



Volume 26 Issue 3

April 2016

President's Message:



Hello Members,

I believe that in my last message I said that spring was on its way. It looks like it took a wrong turn. But just like winter, it is bound to finally arrive.

On that note, it's time to start planning for summer. We still need to get together and discuss our up-coming events. We also need to figure out how to improve the turnout of our meetings. I know how difficult it can be to travel in our area at times. With better weather ahead, I'm hoping that we can make it out of the house and spend a little time catching up with friends.

See you soon,

Jeff



The Erie Männerchor Club has been our "home" for well over 18 years. During that time they became an Associate Member of DANK and allowed members of our Chapter to re-establish a German chorus to bring music back to the club after it was discontinued in the mid 50's. Some say it had to do with anti-German hysteria, but we don't know for sure as they was nothing recorded about their demise. The Männerchor Club had a 'Mannerchor", a Damenchor, and the Gemischterchor following the tradition of its founders. The Mannerchor

Gemischterchor (or German mixed chorus) was reinstated by the North American Singers Association and the Pittsburgh District in 2002. We have held our Christmas Parties, Fasching (Mardi Gras) Party, German American Day and our Anniversary dinners there. We have always been made to feel welcome when there.

The Club has had some difficulties and changes are being made. I met with Matthew Turner (the new General Manager) and Marcie Honard. They have come up with new ideas to support the club as well as a great menu for everything from snacks/appetizers and German entrees that are sure to please.

We'd like you to meet Matt at our next meeting on April 20th.

Why not join us for dinner prior to the meeting and find out for yourselves?

Please call Bev at 456-999 or Brigitte at 520-5036 by Tuesday (Apr 19th) at noon for reservations. Dinner is at 5:30 PM prior to the meeting.



Bischen und Stücken - Bits and Pieces



"Happiness is being remembered"

In thoughts and prayers we send you our best wishes

*Glenn Blodgett
Robert L. Carolyn Brabender
Emil L. Gretel Daeschner
Susan Roehrl
Luise Dudkiewicz (Western Reserve)
Hilde Huttel (West Lake Woods)*

*If you know someone we have missed,
please call Brigitte Chase at 823-3593.*



Männerchor Gesangverein Notes

*"When words leave off, the music begins"
Heinrich Heine*

It's a known fact - Music lifts your spirit! This is our goal when we visit senior assisted living facilities. Their enjoyment lifts our spirits as well!

We provide a 45 minute program that includes traditional German music interspersed with songs from another era that gets their toes tapping and some sing along! Among them are "Zip-a-dee-do-dah, Put your arms around me honey. America the Beautiful, Blue Skirt Waltz. Dear Hearts and Gentle People, and the Hoop-dee-doo Polka.

If you enjoy singing, then come join us on Tuesday evenings from 5 til 6:30 pm. We always welcome new members to the Chorus. Even though you may not know German, you will learn the meaning of the song and then the words are taught phonetically.

Practices are held on Tuesday evenings from 5:00 pm until 6:30 pm at the Club. One time dues \$25 to cover the expenses of membership in the National Singers Assoc. and the Pittsburg District, our director and the purchase of new music..

For more information call Carol Snippet (455-7009) or Bev at 456-9599

German Word of the Month

The German word **Habseligkeiten** is a beautiful one. Literally translated, it means "belongings", but it also means so much more! It comes from the words **haben** ("to have") and **Seligkeit** (a state of bliss, happiness or salvation).

In 2004, the Goethe Institute held a competition for the most beautiful German word. The winner? **Habseligkeiten** (in the plural form). But why is a word that defines "belongings" so beautiful? It's best explained in the words of German Doris Kalka, the woman who submitted the word for the competition.

"The word doesn't signify ownership or wealth of a person. However, it does refer to his possessions and does it in a friendly and compassionate way. Typical for those with these kinds of possessions would be a six-year-old child who empties his pockets to take joy in what he has collected,"

Memories
A way of holding onto the things you Love
the things you Are
the things you never want to
LOSE

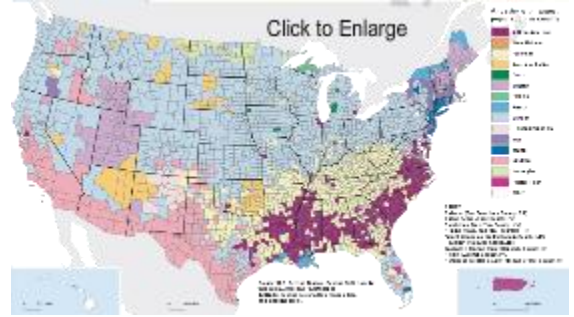
So **Habseligkeiten** means more than any old items you have laying around or the items you order on Amazon. It refers to items to which there is emotion attached. A pretty stone that you've been carrying for months in your pocket or the diary that you write in every night are both **Habseligkeiten**. If you were forced to leave your home and could only take one backpack of stuff with you, what would you take? Those items are probably your **Habseligkeiten**

By Nicole Glass, Editor of The Week in Germany



GERMAN AMERICAN HERITAGE by Francine McKenna-Kline

What is it that Levi Strauss, Sandra Bullock, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Henry John Heinz, Adolph Coors, John Jacob Astor, Elvis Presley, Henry Kissinger, Meryl Streep and Albert Einstein have in common? Very different people from the past and present but together with 15 percent of the current US population, 42.8 million, they have German or part German ancestry. If descendants from other German speaking European countries are included, such as Austria and Switzerland, the total of Deutschamerikaner, German Americans, would reach 25 per cent.



Who was it who wanted to leave Germany over the centuries, to take a risky journey across the ocean into the unknown, and why? Well legend has it that around 1,000 AD a German explorer called Tyrker landed on the North American continent, but then it went a bit quiet until the 1600's when more easily authenticated emigrations began to take place.

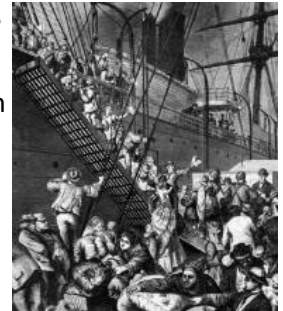
In 1608 a sailing ship "Mary and Margaret" brought the very first German immigrants, who were seeking religious freedom as well as a better future and included amongst them was a PhD botanist. A transatlantic voyage in those days took eight to ten weeks and, after the ship docked on America's East Coast the skilled craftsmen, farmers and tradesmen, representative of most of the immigrants that later followed them, initially settled in the fort town of Jamestown.

German American Day, which takes place on October 6, celebrates German immigrants who arrived 75 years later, the first organized group of 13 Mennonite families who arrived on that date in 1683 and were amongst the first to found Germantown, Pennsylvania.

German emigration did not reach significant numbers until the 18th century, when a principal reason was to escape both from the constant murderous attacks from various armies, including those involved in The Thirty Years War (1618-1648) and the War of Spanish Succession, and the chaos and long term impact that had resulted. Especially in the southwest, an area that had been virtually destroyed.

An increase in the exodus to other European countries had begun around 1700, with the British Government encouraging German Protestants to settle in Britain's American colonies and by 1711 having already spent over £100,000, a huge amount of money in those days, to transport the immigrants to their New World.

German immigrants made up one third of the colonies population and were second only to the English by the mid 18th century, and it was Philadelphia's Der Pennsylvanischer Staatsbote, a German language newspaper, that first broke the news of the signing of the American Declaration of Independence on July 5, 1776. A day ahead of English newspapers, which began to report it at the same time as German copies of the Declaration were already available and being circulated.



By the 19th century political factors were having an increasing influence on decisions to immigrate to the United States. The post Napoleonic government was persecuting liberals and democrats, a revolution in 1848 affected the whole country, the 'industrial revolution' in England had ruined some of Germany's home industries and markets, while the addition of potato blight and the failure of both wheat and grape harvests made life increasingly difficult.

However this era of emigration was the beginning of a German-American cultural rebirth, because many of these new immigrants had medical, educational and legal backgrounds, or were artists or musicians, better educated than most of those that had gone before, and also more in touch with the changes taking place in the modern world and European scene. A thriving German community soon was established, and the majority of early German immigrants were 'survivors' whatever the situation.

The success of the immigrants inspired others to seek a better life in a country that was free from the constrictions of their homeland, with a democracy, as well as both opportunities and land available and obtainable. Emigration boomed and between 1820 and 1914 over 6,500,000 people left Germany for the United States, with nearly 1,000,000 arriving

during the 1850's alone.

Some jobs were held almost exclusively by German Americans, such as brewers, watchmakers, distillery workers and land surveyors while they also comprised a large section of the bakers and butchers, cabinet makers, blacksmiths, tailors, millers, stone masons, shoe makers, typesetters and printers, as well as mechanics, plumbers, and plasterers.

Despite an initial outbreak of German nationalism following the outbreak of World War I in 1914, after the country entered the conflict on April 6, 1917, for a number of reasons which affected the United States itself, this decision was supported by a majority of German-Americans.

It was during this time however that many Germanic surnames were anglicized, along with towns, streets and buildings with German names.

Immigration during the 1920's slowed down, and official quota's were put in place, but because of the economic and political situation, together with the persecution taking place against the Jewish people and other minorities during the 1930's, there was once again an increase in emigration of those with the financial means to leave Germany, followed after WWII with a quota of displaced persons. While beginning in the late 40's, as the USA had many military bases in Germany's 'American sectors', 'GI Brides', the spouses, and children, of US military personnel who had married while abroad were given permission to live in the USA following the War Brides Act of 1945.

Enormous contributions were made to USA culture by its German immigrants. From economic and technological development, founding breweries, inventing ketchup, producing Presidents, establishing banking, industrial and philanthropic dynasties, to designing the Brooklyn Bridge and of course introducing Santa Claus, a different United States of America would have been created if those immigrants had decided to stay 'at home'.



Map of German Population, in light blue, throughout USA, 2000 census, Public Domain Wikipedia. Photograph of German emigrants headed for New York board a steamer, circa 1900's in Hamburg, Germany from a collection in the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, courtesy de.Wikipedia, US Poster WWI, public domain Wikipedia



Aus Oma's Küchen... Call me old-fashioned, but I am always anxious for my first Rhubarb dessert of the season, be it creamy Rhubarb pie or an Upside Down Rhubarb Cake!

Rhubarb is a perennial vegetable, though it is generally used as a fruit in desserts and jams. You only eat the stalks, which have a rich tart flavor. The leaves of this plant are poisonous, so be sure that they are not ingested. Rhubarb is easy to grow, but needs cool weather to thrive.

Here is a recipe for my **RHUBARB UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE**

Preheat oven to 350 Degrees.

6 c. rhubarb cut in ½ inch pieces

20 large marshmallows – cut in ¼'s

1½ c. white sugar

Put in well greased (PAM) 9x13 x 2 ½ inch pan

Cream:

1 c. margarine

2 c. white sugar

Add: 4 eggs, on at a time

Sift:

3½ c. flour (sifted)

6 tsp. baking powder

½ tsp. salt then Add alternately with 1 c. of milk

Spoon over rhubarb in pan. Bake at 350 degrees in oven for 50 minutes, **or** until tests done with toothpick.

Cool in pan for 5 minutes, loosen edges and invert onto serving tray

NOTE: Original recipe is for ½ the above ingredients and is baked in a 9-inch square pan.





THIS IS DANK CHAPTER 71 - THE GERMAN HERITAGE SOCIETY OF ERIE!

Several years ago, a young gentleman who was interning in our national office was asked to create a location specific logo for the chapters if they so desired. My request was to include the State Seal, City name, the Brig Niagara and the Lighthouse to represent our position on Lake Erie and the DANK logo identifying our affiliation. He suggested doing it with the blue background representing Lake Erie. This logo was the result!

Twenty-six years ago, the Charter Members had determined that we have a three-fold purpose. 1) to learn more about our German ancestral background; 2) the effect of the German population in Erie; 3) the preservation of the traditions, language and culture of Germany.

In the early years, we were blessed to have a number of members who were born in Germany who were willing to share their stories with us. As it is across the country, fewer persons are arriving from Germany and seeking out other German Americans. With media communicating via the internet, skypeing, the newcomers are less homesick and not as inclined as perhaps their parents would have been in connecting to fraternal, social (vereins) organizations such as the athletic Turners or the musical Gesangvereins. In the heavier German populated cities, you can find the Trachtenvereins (featuring regional dress), and the Rheinischervereins. And sadly, they too are feeling the drain of membership.

At the National DANK Board meetings, we keep putting our heads together trying to find a way to increase membership. There is no easy 'one solution fixes it all' since each DANK Chapter has its own identity based on its activities. We have asked what we can do to interest new members. Everyone has been asked what they are looking for in DANK but no one really gives us an answer! Putting on events such as a Maifest, Oktoberfest, Christmas Markets, Picnics, and Volkstrauertag (Remembrance Day) requires volunteers to coordinate. Those who have stood by and helped are now getting older and have personal difficulties and they have earned their rest.

Can we regroup? We can with your help! Let us know why you can't attend functions; is it the day, the time or the location? What kind of programming do you want to see? Guest speakers? genealogy programs? videos? slide shows? travel events? Kaffee Klatsches? Language classes?

As we enter our 26th year, let's make it our year of renewal! You can send your comments to Jeff Chase via e-mail (jchase8@gmail.com) or a call to (814) 520-5036. Better still - Come to the meeting and talk to him.



MEETING: April 20th
Erie Männerchor Club - Diamond Room
7:00 PM Program: Erie's German History
Dinner opt: 5:30 - Call for reservations



DANK Chapter 71
750 East 10th Street
Erie, PA 16503-1414

Address correction requested

FIRST CLASS MAIL



Meeting: April 20th

Cherry Blossoms in Germany

You might have seen images of the cherry blossom trees that blanket Washington, D.C. every spring. The 3,000 trees around the Tidal Basin were a gift from Japan to the United States in 1912, symbolizing the friendship between the two countries, celebratory events and a parade marking the occasion.



Japan has gifted its prized *sakura* trees to several other countries, including Brazil, China, Turkey and - you guessed it - Germany! In Germany, the trees bloom a few weeks later than in the US, but nevertheless come with their own celebrations. Since 1968, the city of Hamburg - which is home to about 2,000 Japanese residents and 100 Japanese companies - has hosted an annual cherry blossom festival, complete with fireworks, a Japanese *Kulturtag* ("day of culture") and a bi-yearly pageant for a cherry blossom princess. In the 1960s, Hamburg received approximately 5,000 cherry blossom trees from Japan, which were planted along the city's riverbanks.

Other German cities host smaller cherry blossom festivals of their own. And in Bonn, the cherry blossoms have become a major tourist attraction in recent years. In the mid-1980s, the city decided to plant cherry blossom trees all throughout Bonn's *Altstadt* ("old town") in order to make it a nicer place to live. The plan worked: Bonn's *Heerstraße* is now one of the most attractive springtime destinations. Photographs depicting Bonn's tunnel of pink have become an internet sensation, bringing tourists from around the world to visit the city during peak bloom.

Japan's gifts have brought beauty to cities across the world, including Germany!

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(twig 3/24/16) Nicole Glass, Editor