Der Botschafter

THE AMBASSADOR

German-American Heritage Foundation of the USA, Inc.



Spring 2024



75th Anniversary of the Berlin Airlift— How the U.S. and Royal Air Forces Saved Berlin's Blockaded Residents

Find out more on p. 6



Babe Ruth: An American Icon

Learn about baseball legend Babe Ruth's humble upbringing, his fluency in German, and his lucky break that propelled him to sporting fame.



The Magic of Vienna—A Midwinter Trip to Austria

Waltzing in Vienna at the former imperial palace, the Hofburg, can be a dream come true. Find out how you can be a princess, or prince, for a night.



GAHF Scholarship Recipients

Find out more about the two young German Americans who received GAHF's first scholarship award.



German Connections Website Launches

Our long-awaited one-stop shop for all things German American is ready to go.



ROAMing Los Angeles

Discover how you can use your GAHF membership to explore exciting new places.

German Night at American University in Washington, DC on Tuesday, March 26

Professor William Quirk (third from left) organized the very first German Night on the AU campus to provide incentives for students about studying German and studying abroad through one of AU's programs in Germany and Austria.

Daniel Villanueva, GAHF's 1st VP (left) and executive director Katja Sipple (right) had a chance to interact with AU alumni and current students, including GAHF scholarship recipient Katrina Klopcic (third from right) and former intern Sam Sjoberg.





MEMBER'S CORNER - Thank you for your support!

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Liebe Mitglieder und Freunde! Dear Members and Friends!

As this is my first letter as president, the following remarks will expand on what I shared with you in my vision statement last fall. I wrote about my own heritage, the need to perhaps refine GAHF's mission and create a future roadmap through a strategic planning process, and to then capitalize on what we learn in time for our 50th anniversary year in 2026/2027.

First, let us focus on the word "heritage". Afterall, our name includes the word. For me, the words honor, pride, and courage come to mind as do values, traditions, and culture. It's what makes each of us unique; and the focus on heritage makes GAHF unique. There are many German American organizations that focus on public policy, transatlantic relations, and business, but there is no national organization, other than GAHF, that focuses on "heritage".

We must find ways to preserve what German immigrants who came to America starting in the 1600s infused into American culture. We need to also identify and share the contributions of more recent immigrants who also help shape our country. Our German heritage has become our culture. While what is inherited represents heritage, culture is the manifestation of the past in the present, and it is constantly changing.

I recently cleaned out our childhood home and came across a book entitled *Die Gute Alte Zeit in Pennsylvanien* published in Philadelphia in 1880. The pages were brown and brittle and written in *Fraktur*. The title made me smile, because we often hear people say times were better back then. The first 100 plus years of America indeed saw much change as immigrants adapted to their new homeland. The book's foreword states that it is not about what happened in those early years, but how it was. "Aber das Verständniss zu Vielem, was sie meldet, wird gar oft fehlen, wenn man nicht den Hintergrund, die Zustände, die Sitten, die Verhältnisse im Hause, in der Gesellschaft, im staatlichen und kirchlichen Leben, kennt. Dadurch erst wird uns die Vergangenheit wahrhaft näher gebracht. Ohne diese Ausfüllung bleibt die Geschichte ein leeres Gerüsste." In short, we need to understand what thinking and traditions informed immigrants to

understand why they did what they did, otherwise history is just like the bare frame of a building.

The natural question then is how do we go about preserving and communicating heritage in a way that speaks to today's generations? In addition to congregating in religious communities, many early immigrants took part in *Vereinsleben* (club life). Immigrants joined clubs where they were comfortable and the activities reminded them of their home country – food, language, music and much more were the common bonds. Club life was integral for many generations while today, many clubs struggle to thrive. The GAHF board has begun the strategic planning process, which includes identifying how we can help and partner with individuals and organizations to preserve, teach, and foster the contributions of German Americans past and present.

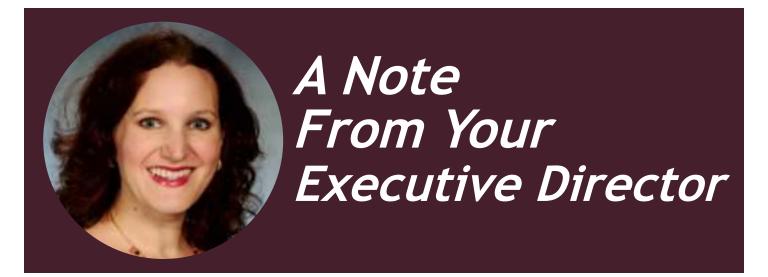
However, other imperatives may well come out of the strategic planning process, too. We have already demonstrated that there are indeed many ways to achieve our mission, and the ideas will need to be prioritized and introduced over time. Also, if you have skills or talents to help us move forward, please share those with me as well. For example, if you are a writer, now is the time to begin preparing a booklet on the "First Fifty Years of GAHF" in time for the 50th anniversary. A 40-year history was already written and needs to be updated.

I hope you can sense the enthusiasm, energy, and vision with which the staff and board of directors are moving forward by having awarded the first college scholarships, launching a national website of German-themed organizations and businesses, and the start of the strategic planning process.

Yes, there is much to delve into during 2024 to ensure that our path forward is clearly laid and, most importantly, achievable. Ohne Vergangenheit, keine Zukunst—without the past there is no future. Let us shape the future together! I welcome your reactions to my thoughts and additional ideas about what GAHF can do for you and your local German American community, please send me a note at cschmidt@gahmusa.org.

Herzliche Grüße

Christiane



Dear Members and Friends,

It's springtime again, and it's not just flowers that blossom, but also new ideas. It has been a year since we introduced our re-designed newsletter, and I want to thank you for the many contributions we have received. I am so glad that we can give you a voice, and use this medium to share your unique experiences and expertise. This issue is full of exciting news, including an announcement of our scholarship winners (p. 11) and I hope you find the articles just as informative and insightful as I do.

In case you missed it, we have a new membership coordinator at GAHF, Isabella Kiedrowski, who can help you with many GAHF-related questions. For the first time in our history, we are building a true customer relations database that will allow us to effectively manage the information you provide, and to deliver the best results for you. Isabella has prepared a survey, and we would very much appreciate your assistance in completing your membership profile so we can better tailor our offerings to your needs and wishes. If you have not yet received the survey, please contact Isabella at kiedrowski@ gahmusa.org to receive a copy.

We are also thrilled to finally introduce our German Connections project. You may be familiar with its beta version, our previous online directory called German Roots, but thanks to the German Embassy in Washington, DC who generously supported the development of this site, we are now ready to launch German Connections, the one-stop shop for all things German American across the United States. And since GAHF strives to represent all German-speaking heritage, we are also looking to our Austrian American and Swiss American friends to fill the map with information about clubs, organizations, sights, restaurants, and much more. Do you have a favorite Austrian restaurant that serves the best Wiener Schnitzel or Fiakergulasch? Please share our URL www.germanconnections.org with the owners, and encourage them to create a page. It's easy, free, and will only take a few minutes of your time. If you're looking for instructions, please turn to p. 15, where we have

detailed, easy-to-follow steps describing how to either make a new listing or claim an existing one.

Last but not least, I am incredibly excited to announce our 2024 Distinguished German American of the Year Award recipient: TV host and entrepreneur Samantha Brown. Brown, who is of German and Scottish descent, lives in Brooklyn, N.Y., and has been hosting the Emmy-winning PBS travel show Samantha Brown's Places to Love since January 2018. Each week, Places to Love takes viewers to little known destinations across the globe, giving us an intimate look at the people and locations that shape local culture. Her work brings both domestic and foreign sites to people's living rooms, inspiring viewers to venture out and discover cities and towns all over the world; but also enabling those who may not be able to explore the world themselves to experience new adventures from the comfort of home. Brown previously worked for the Travel Channel where she presented shows such as Girl Meets Hawaii, Great Vacation Homes, Great Weekends, and Passport to Europe. For the last 12 years, she has also been promoting her own travel luggage line called "Samantha Brown: Travel America" utilizing her personal experience as a globetrotter who has visited more than 75 countries to help people save space and pack efficiently. The gala will take place in October in Washington, DC; please stay tuned for more information regarding the date and the venue. We hope to see you there to celebrate yet another accomplished German American.

As always, there is even more information, including many photos, on our Facebook and Instagram pages, and on our You-Tube channel. Please follow us and/or subscribe if you haven't done so already. Use this linktree to quickly and easily find us online: https://linktr.ee/Gahmusa

I wish you a wonderful spring season as we enjoy warmer weather and more daylight. *Alles Gute und bis bald!*

Yours sincerely,

Katia Sipple

Katja Sipple Executive Director



75th Anniversary of the Berlin Airlift - How the U.S. and Royal Air Forces Saved Berlin's Blockaded Residents - Opening on May 9 at 6 pm

By Katja Sipple

hen dawn broke in Berlin, Germany on June 24, 1948, the outside temperature was cool enough to keep people snuggled into their beds and blankets. At 6 o'clock local time that morning, Soviet troops had enforced a complete blockade of the city and its inhabitants, including the areas controlled by Western allies. Berliners and Allied troops alike awoke in a place that was akin to an open-air prison: an area that was completely closed off, and could no longer be reached by road, rail, or water.

Post-World War II Germany was a divided and occupied country, and Berlin was no exception. The Allies, consisting of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union, had each claimed distinct territories, which were initially administered through the Allied Control Council. The German capital city with its approximately two-and-a-half million inhabitants was no exception. It too was jointly occupied by the Allied powers and divided into four sectors despite being geographically located in the Soviet zone. All four countries were entitled to special privileges in Berlin, and this included the Soviet sector of Berlin, which was legally separate from the rest

of the Soviet zone.

The blockade did not come as a complete surprise as relations between the Allied Powers had been plagued by growing tensions. The UK's wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill had already warned the world in his 1946 speech in Fulton, Miss. that the alliance forged during the Second World War was breaking down: "From Stettin on the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent." Behind that curtain, the Soviets had tightened their control, and had expanded their sphere of influence by forming a ring of satellite states.

In February of 1948, a Communist faction seized control of the government in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and shortly afterward, the Soviet Union imposed arbitrary restrictions on who and what could enter Berlin. These access curtailments, which for example included a temporary halt on coal shipments, were designed to create supply shortages and to instill fear in a population that was still dealing with rationing and a ravaged infrastructure. Of course, these actions also led to increased tensions between the Allied powers, and eventually to the breakdown of the initial plan of governing Germany as a single unit.

The question of whether the Western occupation zones in Berlin would remain under Western Allied control or whether the Soviets would take over the entire city resulted in the first crisis of the coming Cold War. A failed joint attempt to establish a new currency proved to be the final straw, and prompted the Soviet powers to block off Berlin.

"When we refused to be forced out of Berlin, we demonstrated to the people of Europe that with their cooperation we could act, and act resolutely, when their freedom was threatened."

~ President Harry S. Truman

The Western allies did not want to engage militarily, but not acting would mean abandoning the city to the Soviets. In response, the United States and the United Kingdom created a daring plan to airlift food, fuel, and other supplies from air bases in western Germany. The Truman administration rightfully considered these flights a humanitarian mission, and so the the United States launched "Operation Vittles" on June 26, with the United Kingdom following suit two days later with "Operation Plainfare." Despite the desire for a peaceful resolution to the standoff, the United States also sent B-29 bombers to the UK, which were capable of carrying nuclear weapons. The beginning of the airlift proved difficult, and Western diplomats asked the Soviets to seek a diplomatic solution to the impasse.

In time, the airlift became ever more efficient, and the number of planes increased. At the height of the campaign, a plane landed at Tempelhof Airport every 45 seconds. By spring 1949, the Berlin Airlift had proved successful, and the Western Allies had demonstrated that they could sustain the operation indefinitely. At the same time, the Allied counter-blockade on eastern Germany was causing severe shortages, which, Moscow feared, might lead to political upheaval.

On May 12, 1949, Moscow lifted the blockade of West Berlin. The Berlin Crisis of 1948–1949 solidified the East-West division of Europe. Shortly before the end of the blockade, the Western Allies created the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO, to establish a defensive alliance against the expanding Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact of 1955. This constellation would determine world politics for more than four decades, and the balance of powers played a vital role during the Cold War.

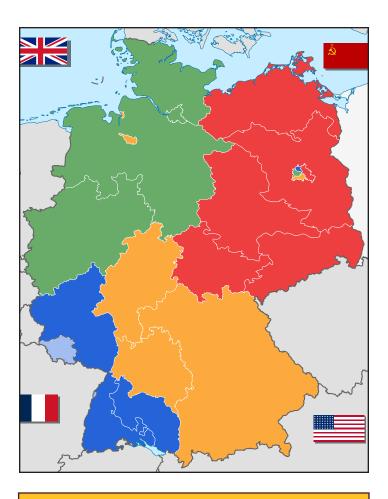


Exhibit Opening Thursday, May 9, 2024 at 6 pm

Speakers:

- Gary Francis Powers, Jr., Author & Historian
- Dr. Andrew Wackerfuss, Historian, Air Force Historical Support Division (AF/HOH)

Light refreshments will be served. Admission fee: \$20 for non-members; \$17 for members. Tickets are available at www.gahmusa.org.

Location:

German-American Heritage Museum 719 6th Street NW Washington, DC 20001

Roaming Los Angeles: Enjoy Museum Visits for Free—Thanks to ROAM

By Petra Schürmann, GAHF Board Member

id you know that one of the wonderful benefits of becoming a GAHF member for a minimum contribution of \$100 per year is free admission to over 500 of museums in the United States and Canada? This is made possible thanks to the German-American Heritage Museum's membership in the ROAM program, the "Reciprocal Organization of Associated Museums."

To my surprise, I discovered that I get free access to 80 museums in my home state of California alone! That seemed to be too good to be true! So, I put the ROAM membership to a test and selected the most glamorous and famous museum in my adopted hometown Los Angeles as my destination: The Grammy Museum.

Although I have lived in L.A. for almost 30 years, I am a little bit embarrassed to admit that I have never before visited the Grammy Museum—part of the L.A. Live complex in Downtown. So, I welcomed the opportunity to finally have a reason to check it out. Luck would have it that the museum is currently showing a special exhibit about Shakira, one of my favorite singers. The general admission is \$18 per person, including special exhibits. At the museum's check-in counter, I presented my GAHF Membership Card featuring the ROAM logo and, sure enough, I got in for free! And what a fabulous museum the Grammy Museum in L.A. is! Five floors filled with giant video walls, memorabilia, artifacts, Grammy trophies, handwritten original scores and lyrics, as well as the original stage costumes of many famous stars of the music industry with detailed explanations about when, where, and of course, by whom the outfit was worn. You can even create your own music production in one of the recording booths.

I only managed to visit the top floor of the museum dedicated to Hip Hop culture and the special Shakira Exhibition. I certainly will be back soon to explore more of the amazing collections on display. However, before I do so, I'll check out two other ROAM museums: The Zimmerman (see photo on right), a museum of vintage cars in El Segundo, south of LAX, and the Timken Museum of Art in San Diego, founded by the family of the Distinguished German American of the Year, William R.





Timken, whom GAHF honored in 2009. And anybody living in Northern California, should not miss the Walt Disney Family Museum in San Francisco and the Schulz Museum in Santa Rosa, preserving the legacy of German Norwegian cartoonist Charles M. Schulz who created iconic cartoon characters Charlie Brown and Snoopy!

Renew your membership or become a new member today and start roaming!

You can sign up online at gahmusa.org/support-join/. For a list of all ROAM member museums, click on the ROAM logo on our Website or visit:

https://sites.google.com/site/roammuseums/home/list-of-roam-museums











Special Exhibition "American Dreams. A new life in the USA" at Stuttgart's Haus der Geschichte through July 28

By Dr. Christina Ziegler-McPherson, Haus der Geschichte

The destitute Leidring farmer's son Andi Huonker made a million-dollar fortune in the gold rush in the Klondike. The Communist Anna Nill also became rich in America, and donated her fortune to children in need in her hometown of Mössingen. The radical pietist and End Times prophet Johann Georg Rapp from the Heckengäu founded the model settlements "Harmony" and "Economy" in the "Promised Land."

For others, their dreams burst like soap bubbles. Franz Gräter from Schwäbisch Hall ended up as an alcoholic. The revolutionary had been forced to emigrate in 1826, and returned to Württemberg 16 years later, poor. Rese Krapf moved from Lake Constance to Providence, R.I. for a life as an ordinary housemaid. Some lost their lives due to disease and violence. For instance, most members of the Fink family, who came from near Ulm, died in the Dakota War of 1862.

The fact that the emigrants from Europe did not settle in a "virgin land," but rather displaced and killed Indigenous Americans, becomes clear in the exhibition. It also shows why Indigenous Americans defended themselves against the advance of white settlers. Some 200 original objects - from gold rush nuggets to wooden pillows - tell the stories of 32 people over three centuries.

They all left the German Southwest to start a new life in America

For more information, please visit https://www.hdg-bw.de/history-museum-stuttgart/ and click on 'American Dreams'. You can also download an English-language brochure. The exhibit can be viewed now through July 28. 2024.

Christina A. Ziegler-McPherson is an American historian in Germany specializing in migration history and assimilation theory. She holds a Ph.D in history from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and is the author of four books and several articles dealing with these themes.

As we at GAHF prepare for our 50th anniversary, we are curious to hear about your/your family's American Dream. Did it come true? Please let us know and write to us at info@gahmusa.org.

GAHF Awards Two Scholarships to Young German Americans

By Katja Sipple

fter many months of planning under the leadership of scholarship committee chairman Daniel Villanueva, GAHF's first vice president, the German-American Heritage Foundation announced last October that it would award two domestic scholarships to young German American students—a first in our almost 50-year history. The committee received a number of applications from very qualified candidates, and selecting the two winners proved to be a surprisingly challenging task. We are incredibly pleased to introduce our first two scholarship recipients today, who each received \$2,500 to assist with educational expenses. Our sincere congratulations go to Ms. Katrina Klopcic from Clifton, Va. and Ms. Yasmin Moule from Davis, Calif.

Katrina is a student at American University in Washington, DC where she is pursuing a double major in Language and Area Studies: German/Europe (BA) and Public Relations & Strategic Communication (BA), whilst Yasmin who is currently a freshman at University of California Davis is double majoring in Cognitive Science and Applied Mathematics.

Katrina's German heritage dates all the way back to the 1730s; her mother's ancestors first arrived from southern Germany and settled in Pennsylvania with two other family branches following in the 1840s and the early 1900s. During her gap year in Esslingen, Germany, she fully immersed herself in German culture and language, specifically the Swabian dialect as Esslingen is not far from Stuttgart, but she also had the chance to learn a bit more about her own family's history by exploring various cemeteries and churches and learning about her Jewish ancestors whose graves remain intact. When asked about the most significant takeaway of her year at the Cultural Centre in Germany, she has this to say: "The biggest thing I learned is how much I truly love speaking German. I've always loved it, but this year showed me how perfectly happy and at home I feel in Germany, speaking the language and living the culture. I love it because of the different opportunities it has offered me. I love it because I have made friends, memories, and been able to learn more about myself. I love it because I will use it for the rest of my life. I love it because it lets me be me."

Our second winner, Yasmin, has a much more recent connection to Germany. She was born in Leverkusen, not far from Cologne, to a German mother and an American father. At the age of two, she moved to California where she has been living ever since. As a toddler who was raised in a bicultural and





Katrina Klopcic (left) and Yasmin Moule (right)

bilingual household, she spoke a unique mix of German and English that the family called Denglisch. Luckily, Davis, Calif. has a large German community, and Yasmin and her brother grew up with German friends. Their mother also provided them with German books and formal German lessons that continued through eighth grade. When she was 10, her family returned to Germany for six months, and Yasmin attended a local Gymnasium, an academic German secondary school, in Erfstadt, southwest of Cologne, and also joined a Sportverein. She formed lasting friendships, and improved her German to the level of full fluency, earning a California State Seal of Biliteracy in German. Her interest in cognitive science, which combines linguistics, psychology, philosophy, neuroscience, and AI, was inspired by her own bilingual background." I decided to study CogSci because growing up German American made me interested in multilingualism and how people acquire a language. I want to work in AI-based technology in the future focused on reducing language and cultural barriers between people of different cultures and languages."

We wish our two scholarship recipients much success in all their future endeavors, and look forward to staying in touch. If you are interested in applying for a GAHF scholarship, please email us at scholarships@gahmusa.org.

BABE RUTH: AN AMERICAN ICON©

By Frank Amoroso

eorge Herman "Babe" Ruth was the greatest athlete of the 20th century. Babe revolutionized how baseball was played and he saved the game from the stain of the Black Sox scandal. His accomplishments were so phenomenal that a new word was added to the lexicon in his honor. The word "Ruthian" means: "Of a prodigious accomplishment."

He was born on Feb. 6, 1895, in the rowhouse of his maternal grandparents. During George's early childhood, he lived in a neighborhood known as Pigtown, which was as squalid and deplorable as the name implies.

As a child, he was surrounded by extended family and learned to speak German fluently. A picture of the young Babe with his extended family shows the vibrant social life of the Ruths.



Babe Ruth's extended family, circa 1896. Babe is in the lower left corner in the arms of his mother. Babe's father is in the front row wearing a bow tie.

Unfortunately, this secure and convivial life surrounded by German relatives did not last long. Perhaps due to the deaths of numerous infants endured by his parents, they moved from that safe and nurturing environment to a different neighborhood where George Senior opened a saloon. The family lived in an apartment above the bar, and as Babe later recalled he was often in the bar, "I learned to drink and chew tobacco when I was about five years old."

Not surprisingly, the young Babe rebelled at his chaotic life. He was declared incorrigible at the age of seven and sent to St. Mary's Industrial School for Boys where he developed his skill and passion for the game of baseball. He thrived on the baseball diamond. Babe recognized the importance of baseball in his life, "If it wasn't for baseball, I'd be in either the penitentiary or the cemetery."

He signed a contract to play professional baseball at nineteen. During Babe's early career, he won eighty-nine games as a pitcher for the Boston Red Sox. In 1920, he was traded to the New York Yankees where he shed his duties as a pitcher and became a full-time position player to maximize his astounding ability to slug baseballs higher and further than anyone had ever imagined. This move revolutionized baseball from the scientific game where speed and slapping at the ball were the prevalent strategy to a modern game based on the home run. His tape-measure blasts electrified fans who flocked to games in record numbers to see the great home run hitter. Babe was a natural showman who never disappointed, believing, "Every strike brings me closer to my next home run."

Babe was one of the first celebrity athletes. In addition to his legendary prowess on the field, Babe's antics off the field made him a media darling and endeared him to the consuming public. The Roaring Twenties were characterized by prosperity, the rise of consumerism, and a restless compulsion to discard restrictive norms. With his large appetites for food, booze, and broads, Babe Ruth epitomized the transformative decade. In his words, "I swing big, with everything I've got. I hit big or I miss big. I like to live as big as I can."



Lou "Iron Horse" Gehrig and George Herman "Babe" Ruth

In 1925, another German-American superstar joined Ruth on the Yankees. Lou Gehrig played first base and batted clean-up, contributing to seven World Series championships. He earned the nickname the Iron Horse for his record consecutive game streak of 2,130 – a record that lasted fifty-six years.

Probably due to his own woeful childhood, Babe had a special affinity for kids and gave generously of his time visiting hospitals and orphanages. He famously visited an ailing child in the hospital who asked him to hit a homer. That afternoon, Babe delivered a mighty blast and the youngster recovered. Babe was also known for his fund-raising on behalf of our armed forces during WWII.

In 1942, Babe Ruth and other prominent German-Americans signed the Christmas Declaration denouncing the "Hitler policy of cold-blooded extermination of the Jews of Europe" Urging the German people to overthrow the Nazi regime, the Declaration appeared as a full-page ad in the New York Times and nine other newspapers.

When Babe retired, he held 54 major league pitching and batting records. The most notable were the single-season (60) and career home run (714) records and the World Series record for consecutive scoreless innings pitched (29 2/3).

In 2018, President Trump awarded the nation's highest civilian honor the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Babe. This was a fitting capstone to the legacy of the man whose name is synonymous with the highest standard of excellence. In recent years, the achievements of Shohei Ohtani as a pitcher and batter have brought renewed attention to the brilliance of Babe Ruth. As Babe said, "Heroes get remembered but legends never die." The legend of Babe Ruth continues to shine.

Frank Amoroso has written multiple books about Babe Ruth. *Pigtown* covers Babe's tragic early life as a street urchin. *The Show* is about his professional baseball career and his ascension to stardom with the Boston Red Sox. *The Series* chronicles Babe's exploits in winning the 1918 World Series. Mr. Amoroso's latest novel is *Diamond Fever*, a raucous account of Babe Ruth's barnstorming tour of Cuba in 1920.

His book entitled *German-Americans and Our National Pastime* is a tribute to prominent German Americans who helped shape baseball into the National Pastime through their unparalleled contributions. To buy one of his books, please visit his website at https://www.behindeverygreatfortune.com/or his Amazon store.







Springtime is Asparagus Time - Try this Delicious Asparagus Lasagne Recipe

Ingredients (for 2 people):

250 g each of white and green asparagus
12 sheets of Lasagne pasta (not pre-cooked)
150 g of boiled ham, thinly sliced
2 TB flour
2 TB butter
250 ml asparagus liquid (from cooking process)
250 ml milk
1 TB crème fraîche
80 g Parmesan (grated)
3 TB Mozzarella (grated or shredded)
salt, pepper, nutmeg to taste



Wash and peel asparagus (white asparagus has to be peeled completely with the exception of the tips). Cut off ends. Keep the peels. Cut the asparagus in pieces, retain the asparagus tips. Put the asparagus pieces and the peels in cool saltwater and add a bit of butter. Bring to a gentle boil. Cook the white asparagus first for about 3 minutes, then add the green asparagus, and after another 2 minutes the aspargus tips. Drain after 8 minutes of cooking time, and retain 250 ml of cooking liquid. Put asparagus aside. Cut the ham slices into thin strips.

Prepare Béchamel sauce by melting 2 tablespoons of butter and adding the flour. Remove from heat and slowly pour in reserved cooking liquid. Use a whisk to get a smooth consistency. Turn up the heat again, and slowly add the milk. Bring to a gentle boil until the sauce has thickened. Season with salt, pepper, and nutmeg, and add half the Parmesan and the crème fraîche.

Preheat your oven to 200 degrees Celsius or about 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Pour some of the Béchamel sauce into an oven-safe form, add Lasagne pasta (the pasta sheets will cook during the baking process), pour more sauce, then add asparagus and ham. Continue layering until you have used up your ingredients. The top layer consists of pasta and needs to be covered with sauce. Add the Mozzarella cheese, cover with foil, and bake covered for 20-25 minutes. Remove the foil, and finish baking until the cheese turns golden brown for another 15-20 minutes.

You can eat this delicious dish alone or enjoy it with a tomato or mixed salad.



German Connections—Your One-Stop Shop for Everything German American

By Katja Sipple

Dear fellow German, Austrian and Swiss Americans,

Even today, there are between 40 and 50 million Americans who can trace their ancestors to a German-speaking country and/or region. They live in all 50 states, and many still cherish their heritage, are organized in German American organizations such as singing societies, dancing groups or social clubs.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could visualize this presence, and become more connected using available technology? In 2023, the German Embassy in Washington, DC generously provided funding for this one-stop online shop of all things German American, and we began the work on a new version of GermanConnections.org with a talented young Web design and marketing team from Austria who helped us visualize and conceptualize the idea. The center piece is an online map that features the many organizations, clubs, businesses, restaurants, newspapers, media outlets, German bands and musical groups, schools, sites, and historic landmarks that represent more than 400 years of immigration from German-speaking lands to the United States. However, this project also provides up-to-date links about studying and working in Germany and beyond, resources about German and German-language schools in the United States, information about working abroad, and travel information.

After many months of work, we now celebrate the launch of: **www.germanconnections.org**

This is not an ordinary website, but a virtual directory, similar to Yelp or Angie's List. Listings are completely free, and we encourage you to create an entry for your organization—

complete with photo and logo by clicking on "Add a Listing" in the top right corner. As you can see, there are already a number of entries, and if you find such a listing already exists for your club and/or organization, you or the person you choose as administrator, can claim the listing, and add/change the information.

How to get started:

Step 1: Go to www.germanconnections.org

Step 2: Register or sign in

Step 3: Check to see if a listing exists --> if yes, claim it;

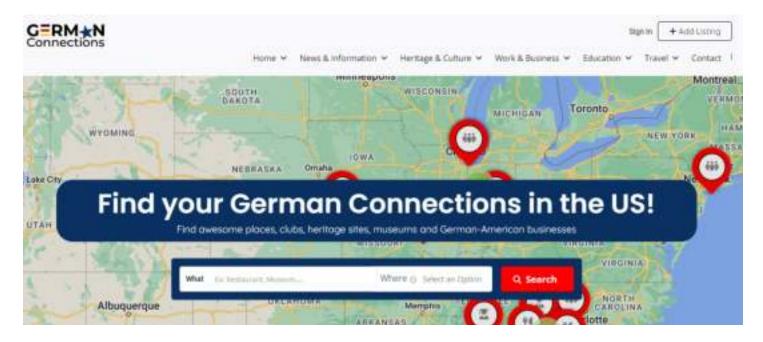
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Step 4: Click "Add a Listing"

Step 5: Create your listing

Help us and others discover America's Germanic treasures and showcase how much immigrants from German-speaking Europe contributed to the United States of today. You know your area best, and we hope you will submit your local attractions, memorials, or even your favorite German, Austrian, or Swiss restaurant. If you have questions, or need additional information, please contact me at sipple@gahmusa.org.







The Magic of Vienna—A Midwinter Trip to Austria's Capital Filled with Cultural Highlights By Katja Sipple

ien, Du Stadt meiner Träume is the name of a still popular nostalgic musical homage composed and written by lawyer Rudolph Sieczynski in 1914. It not only inspired at least two films, including a 1957 musical comedy, the Stanley Kubrick movie "Eyes Wide Shut", but it also remains an audience favorite across the world with performances by contemporary opera stars such as Elīna Garanča and Jonas Kaufmann. The song's popularity speaks to the ongoing appeal of a city that is steeped in almost 2,000 years of history (the entire central district rests on the ruins of a first century Roman military camp called Vindobona) whilst also being thoroughly modern, and home to excellent universities, international companies, the United Nations Office, and the International Atomic Energy Agency. The Vienna of today, once the seat of the multicultural Austro-Hungarian Empire and its Habsburg Dynasty, who had also ruled the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation from 1438-1740 and from 1745 to the 1806 dissolution, is a vibrant city with a lively art and theatre scene, museums, shopping, famous

coffee houses, and culinary delights influenced by the cuisines of Central Europe.

However, what truly makes this place unique is its wonderful tradition of formal balls which mostly take place during the months of January and February. These balls date back to the period of 1814/1815 after the Napoleonic Wars when the Congress of Vienna gathered in the city with crowned heads and aristocrats not only busy redrawing European boundaries to ensure peace and stability, but also desiring entertainment. Official ball season coincides with carnival, which begins on Nov. 11 and ends on Shrove Tuesday; Vienna alone hosts more than 400 balls ranging from smaller gatherings with just a few hundred people to the elegant affairs with thousands of guests at the Hofburg Palace and the famous Vienna Opera Ball with its 5,000 attendees.

This past January, we took our very first official GAHF trip to Vienna. Participants got to enjoy a specially curated two-day program on Jan. 26 and Jan. 27, which began with a private guided tour of the Hofburg Palace, the Sisi Museum,

and the Imperial Apartments.

We met our tour guide Alex, an art historian and a native of Vienna, at the Michaelerplatz, a square behind the Hofburg which is lined with charming Fiaker carriages, the former city palais of the aristocracy, and St Michael's Church, one of Vienna's oldest churches dating to the 13th century where a young Joseph Haydn once played the pipe organ, and which served as a filming location for Ernst Marischka's Sissi film trilogy. During construction work in 1990/1991, archaeologists uncovered a number of amazing finds covering a time period of 1,500 years. Alex not only showed us the remains of a Roman villa with partially preserved wall paintings and heated floors, but also the walls of the 15th century Hofburg Gardens, the foundation of a private residence from the 1700s, and an intact piece of a 19th-century canal. We then proceeded through the arched entrance and past the baroque Winter Riding School, home to the white Lipizzan stallions, into the inner courtyard, which houses the oldest part of the Hofburg, the Schweizerhof, or Swiss Court, named after the Swiss soldiers who guarded the building during the reign of Maria Theresia. The Sisi Museum is a relatively new addition and first opened in 2004. It houses numerous personal items including her baby shoes, parasols, fans, clothing, her beauty preparations, her medicine chest, and even her death certificate to give visitors a better understanding of the complicated monarch. The exhibit begins with the Empress's tragic assassination in 1898, and traces her life from her birth in Munich, her carefree childhood in Possenhofen, to her arrival in Vienna as a young bride, and her frequent travels which she used to escape the confines of court life and the restrictions of her social position. The red thread of the exhibit is Sisi's



Archaeological excavation site at Michaelerplatz

poetry, written in the style of the much admired Heinrich Heine, which provides an intimate view of her struggles after the tragic death of her first daughter Sophie and the suicide of her son Crown Prince Rudolf.







Emperor's Study in the Hofburg Palace

Having completed our tour of the museum, Alex guided us to the splendor of the Imperial Apartments where each member of the family had their own suite of rooms. Emperor Franz Joseph's apartment included audience and conference rooms, which were open to members of the public and his cabinet and designed to impress. By contrast, his private study with its writing desk and pictures of his wife and family portrays the image of a modest man devoted to his work. Franz Joseph was an early riser who slept in a simple cast iron bed, sat at his desk at four o'clock in the morning every day of the week, and would even eat his breakfast and lunch in his study. In his later life, his grandchildren were frequent visitors, and court officials describe the children as 'rolling around' on the carpet, and that the emperor gave them used envelopes and colored pencils to draw on.

His wife Sisi's personal rooms were not only more numerous, but also more spacious. She spent her mornings in the dressing and exercise room, where she devoted hours to caring for her long hair and her slender waistline. The walls have bars for gymnastic training and the doorway contains a set of rings. She also had a separate bathroom with running water and a toilet installed, and the original copper tub and even the linoleum to protect the parquet floors can still be admired.

Our wonderful guide Alex then led us to the Heldenplatz, past the Swiss Court and the Imperial Chapel, to the National Library and after a quick wave at the beautiful horses that had retired to their stables, we found ourselves at the starting point again.





Swiss Court and Amalienburg with Reichskanzlei

After thanking him for an unforgettable two-and-a-half hours, we proceeded to dinner at Zum Leupold, a traditional family-owned Austrian restaurant. Nourished by *Grießnockerlsuppe, Wiener Schnitzel,* and *Kaiserschmarrn* we went back to our hotels to prepare for the big night the following day.





Our ball, organized by the medical doctors' guild, was held at the Hofburg Palace, and hosted some 3,000 guests in 20 different rooms. Although the ball doesn't officially open until 10 pm, guests start arriving as early as 8 pm. After some obligatory pictures on the lower levels and the formal staircase, we proceeded to our reserved table in the *Metternichsaal*, which is just a short distance from the main ballroom where the procession of dignitaries, the ballet and opera interludes, and the debutante performance took place. One lucky member of our group even had his photo taken with two ballerinas.

Every Viennese ball features a committee of young ladies clad in white gowns and young gentlemen in either black or white tie who open the ball and make their official entrance into society. As soon as the words "Alles Walzer" are spoken, guests flock to the dance floor for the first waltz of the evening. The main ballroom always features two alternating orchestras—one that plays standard ballroom music and a second dance band that focuses on Latin tunes—and they keep guests entertained until 5 am. The other rooms include a retro disco, a casino, a *Heurigen* with traditional Viennese music, and even a hairdresser and a seamstress to repair minor damage to tresses or dresses. Of course, the ball also has a team of medics who can assist dizzy debutantes and dancers as becoming lightheaded due to dehydration, excitement, and the heat of the lights is a real problem, or hand out bandages for blister-covered feet.

One of the highlights is always the Fledermaus Quadrille, a lively formation set to the music of Johann Strauss Jr. which is danced in long lines by two opposite couples. On our way out we made sure to get our *Damenspende*, or ladies' present, another Viennese tradition, before we stepped out into the night in search of a taxi. Sadly, all the flowers which lined the grand staircase, and which can be taken home by ladies after 2 or 3 am, were already gone by the time we left. Flowers or not, we had a wonderful time, and we hope to do this again in 2025. If you are interested in next year's program, which will include a dance lesson at the prestigious Elmayer Dance School, and your choice of a Hofburg ball or the Ball of the Vienna Philharmonic at the Golden Hall, please email Katja Sipple at sipple@gahmusa.org Details will be posted on our website www.gahmusa.org later in the summer.







Forging Economic Synergy: The Strength and Significance of the German-American Business Partnership

By Dr. Christoph Schemionek & Jayne Peters, Delegation of German Industry & Commerce in Washington, DC

ermany and the United States are connected through a centuries-long common history, personal friendships, business relations and economic ties. German immigrants have helped to shape the development of the United States and the successful rebuilding of post-war Germany is inextricably linked to US engagement.

The transatlantic marketplace – A strong partnership

For many in both Germany and the US, the close relationship between our two countries is probably best exemplified by the strong economic ties of the transatlantic market. Today, US-German trade totals \$219 billion. Both nations have become important markets for each other, tied by supply chains and investments that have grown over the years. Between 2021 and 2022, exports from the US to Germany grew from \$65.17 billion to \$72.55 billion, making Germany America's seventh largest export market. At the same time, the total imports from Germany to the US amounted to \$146.63 billion, with 22.1% of these imports coming from transportation equipment. With an investment of \$619 billion, Germany is the fourth-largest foreign direct investor in the United States. 5,800 German-owned affiliates create jobs in all regions—from California to Virginia, and from Michigan to Texas. They are a vital part of the daily life of American employees and their families. In total, 923,600 people in the US are employed by German subsidiaries, with 35% of them in the manufacturing sector.

The Future of Work – German-Style Apprenticeships Meet American College Campuses

German companies in the US invest in their workforce and an increasing number of these companies offer cutting-edge German-style apprenticeships, especially in manufacturing. The earn-while- you-learn approach offers apprentices a thorough professional education without accumulating student debt and results in a specialized, highly skilled workforce that helps the US economy embrace technical innovation, keep pace with market developments, and seize growth opportunities. Data from the 2024 German American Business Out-

look revealed that 91% of German subsidiaries in the US face considerable challenges in recruiting a skilled workforce. Initiatives by the German American Chambers of Commerce, or GACC, respond to these very challenges. GACC programs, such as the Industry Consortium for Advanced Technical Training, or ICATT, the Apprenticeship Program and the Michigan Advanced Technician Training Apprenticeship Program, aim to close the skills gap and grow their workforce by attracting young apprentices to manufacturing and other high-tech career paths. These programs are certified by the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce, also known as DIHK, and integrated in the system of the US Department of Labor, solidifying the credibility of the German-style apprenticeship model and its ability to build sustainable talent.



US Businesses in Germany - Important Job Creators

Trade and investment between Germany and the US play a major role in both economies. With 84 million residents and a leading role in Europe's economy, Germany is an attractive location for US companies to invest. In 2021, US investment in Germany reached a total of \$170.2 billion, making it the leading source of non-European FDI in Germany.



The most significant US investments are in manufacturing, as well as in chemicals, information technology, machinery, and finance. US companies are of considerable importance for the German labor market. According to the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany's latest data from 2021, the number of employees of the top 50 US companies in Germany is stable with around 275,000 employees.

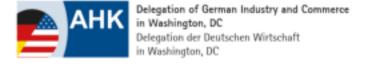
Open Markets – The Main Ingredient for Success

On both sides of the Atlantic, companies' success is based on a skilled workforce and international supply chains. To manufacture high-value goods, modern industries rely on sources and primary products from multiple locations around the world. The ease of moving these primary products in and out of markets is a key factor for successful local and national manufacturing.

The economies and overall well-being of Germany, Europe, the United States, and the transatlantic marketplace can only be secured when goods and investments flow easily, when markets stay open, locals are hired by foreign-owned affiliates, and when foreign-owned affiliates can be run by local CEOs. When each nation does this, we thrive – a transatlantic vision committed to shared economic prosperity.

The German-American business partnership stands at the forefront of the global economic landscape, symbolizing a robust alliance built on innovation, efficiency, and shared values. It is a partnership that serves as a testament to the strength of collaboration, bridging cultures and economies for sustained success.







From the Collection: Classic Children's Books

By Isabella Kiedrowski

hen people think of German children's books, the first thing that comes to mind is often Grimm's Fairy Tales. These originally rather grisly stories are still ubiquitous in Germany and around the world, but what might a German child have read once they grew out of fairy tales? A look at the GAHM's collection gives us a glimpse into the reading habits of young Germans in the last century. Some of these books are still classics, while others have fallen by the wayside. Let us know if you recognize any, or have read them yourself!

Max und Moritz: eine Bubengeschichte in sieben Streichen - Wilhelm Busch

For over 150 years, this book has been a mainstay of German children's literature. Part picture book, part moralistic teaching, the story follows the terrible duo of *Max und Moritz* through a series of capers, from their first to their seventh and final (also fatal) prank.

Wilhelm Busch was a prolific satirist, and while Max and Moritz (who were loosely based on Busch and a childhood friend) come to a sticky end, it is actually their victims—a local widow, their schoolmaster/church organist, and tailor, among others—who are the real laughingstocks. With its caricature-like illustrations, *Max und Moritz* is considered by many to be the precursor of the modern comic strip, and it is true that the protagonists of the Katzenjammer Kids cartoon are recognizably based on Busch's characters. The copy in the museum's collection is from the 128th printing, and is printed in Fraktur, which means that it can be dated to before the

Second World War. Modern copies, however, are printed in a far more legible Latin font, and now that the book is in the public domain, also available for free online.

Emil und die Detektive & Pünktchen und Anton - Erich Kästner

Erich Kästner is well known as one of the giants of 20th century children's literature. His books are still considered classics—and rightly so. Kästner's understanding of children, and his belief that they were worth listening to, flew in the face of the idea that children should be seen and not heard. The GAHM has two of his books in its collection, both first editions: *Emil und die Detektive*, and *Pünktchen und Anton*. While not all of Kästner's books involved young detectives, both of these involve children managing to catch thieves, much to the surprise of the adults around them. Unsurprisingly, both books are still popular among children to this day.

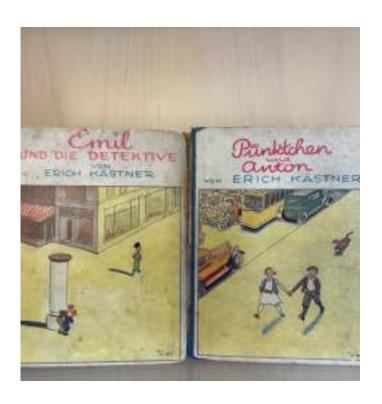
Backfisch Literatur

Around the turn of the century, a young lady, usually between the ages of thirteen and sixteen—known colloquially as a *Backfisch*—would have a new genre of literature available to her: the *Backfischroman*. This type of novel is usually told from a first-person perspective, with the protagonist being an adolescent girl of middle or higher class upbringing. She tends to be an open and friendly person, who pursues her own interests regardless of society's norms and later—having learned her lesson—decides of her own volition to accept her true calling to be a wife and mother. The three examples of Backfisch Literatur in the museum's collection—*Villa Traut*-

heim by Berta Clément, Ein Recht auf Glück! by Marie von Felsener, and Backfischehen's Leiden und Freuden by Clementine Helm—all follow this formula.

The term *Backfisch* and the ideas espoused by these books are by now rather outdated. Towards the 1950s, as options beyond marriage and motherhood became available to women, these books waned in popularity. However, now that their copyrights have expired, many of these *Backfischromane* have entered the public domain and are available online, allowing a new generation of readers to discover them.

These are just the books in the German-American Heritage Museum's collection, and while they give us a glimpse into the past reading habits of German youths, they are by no means a complete representation of what German literature has to offer; other popular authors also included Ottfried Preußler, Karl May, and Thomas Mann, just to name a few. Take a look at your own bookshelves: there's a very good chance that you have some forgotten gems that are only waiting to be rediscovered. *Viel Spaß!*







GAHF thanks board member Birgit Albicker-Rimpel who attended the Salute to Vienna New Year's Concert in New Jersey on Dec. 31, 2023. This concert recreates the beloved Neujahrskonzert, hosted each year in Vienna's legendary Musikverein, which is the home and performance venue of the renowned Vienna Philharmonic.

Salute to Vienna generously supported the GAHF gala silent auction in October 2023. Thank you!

Have You Been Receiving Our Emails?

id you know that the Ambassador newsletter makes up only a small portion of GAHF's outreach? Throughout the year, most of our communications come to you via email—anytime there is a new exhibit or event at the museum, email subscribers are the first to know!

Now is the time to check whether you have been receiving our emails—many people sign up for email notifications from us, only to realize months later that all of our emails were sent to their spam folder—and this, unfortunately, is something we cannot control.

The reason many email providers filter out our emails is because they come from an email address your account does not recognize. Because our email address is not recognized, your account sees anything from that address as suspicious, and automatically sends it to a spam or junk folder, where emails are held for a certain period of time before being deleted. This happens unbeknownst to you, and people often go months without checking their spam folders for legitimate emails that might have gotten lost.

The good news, however, is that you can tell your email provider which emails not to filter out. This procedure is called whitelisting, a term that generally describes a cybersecurity strategy that approves a list of email addresses, IP addresses, domain names or applications. As instructions may vary based on your provider, we have included the four most common providers below. Please follow these simple steps to find us in your inbox:

HOW TO WHITELIST OUR EMAILS

First, determine who your email provider is. We've included instructions for the most common providers: Gmail, Outlook, Yahoo, and AOL

For Gmail:

- Click the gear icon in the upper right hand corner and select "See all settings" from the Quick Settings menu.
- Navigate to "Filters and Blocked Addresses" in the top menu.
- Select "Create a new filter"
- In the "From" field, add our domain: @gahmusa.org
- Click "Create filter"
- Check "Never send it to Spam" in the checkbox
- Click "Create filter"

For Outlook:

- Click the gear icon in Outlook and select "View all Outlook settings"
- · Select "Mail" from the settings menu
- Choose "Junk email" from the submenu
- Click "Add" under "Safe senders and domains"
- Enter our domain:@gahmusa.org
- Choose "Save"

For Yahoo

- Navigate to "Settings" then click "More Settings"
- Select "Filters" and hit "Add"
- Name the filter and add our domain: @gahmusa.org
- Select to send all mail to "Inbox"
- Save your settings

For AOL:

- Open "Contacts" from the left navigation pane
- Click the "New Contact" icon and add our domain: @ gahmusa.org
- Click "Add Contact"

Once you have listed us as a contact, all you need to do is wait—you'll be hearing from us soon! If you have questions, please contact me at **kiedrowski@gahmusa.org**.

Thank you! Isabella Kiedrowski



Max Raabe and Palast Orchester at the Lincoln Theatre in Washington, DC

Max Raabe and Palast Orchestra stunned and delighted the audience at the Lincoln Theatre in Washington, DC on March 20 with their witty songs from 1920s and 30s. In addition to catchy tunes by Kurt Weil, the musicians also entertained with classic American compositions by Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, and Cole Porter. GAHF's Isabella Kiedrowski and Katja Sipple had a chance to pass out promotional materials, as well as speak and pose for a photo with the maestro himself; perhaps not quite, but almost, "Cheek to Cheek".





Learn all about how Germans & German-Americans have enriched our culture and society



"Anyone with a friend or relative who boasts a trace of Teutonic heritage can stop worrying about that next birthday gift." -Michael Dolan, editor of American History





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Our Mission

The German-American Heritage Foundation of the USA® (GAHF) is dedicated to preserving, educating, and promoting the cultural heritage of Americans of German-speaking ancestry. Our mission is to be an effective voice for German Americans in cultural and public policy matters in the United States.

We are committed to:

- Sharing a positive image of Americans of German-speaking heritage by focusing on their historical contributions to American society.
- Strengthening the ethnic awareness and diversity of German-Americans.
- Promoting the German language and culture.
- Cultivating German American friendship and bonds.
- Supporting cooperative efforts among German-Americans and their organizations.

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