

Max Kade Institute Friends Newsletter

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

Speaking of Language



Yiddish in Milwaukee

By Mark L. Loudon, MKI Co-Director

In 2000, the Milwaukee International Arts Festival premiered a play about an important part of the city's cultural history titled *To Lift Ourselves Up: The Yiddish Theatre in Milwaukee*. Written by local actor and playwright John Schneider of Theatre X, the critically acclaimed play focused on the rich tradition of a local Yiddish-language theater company known as the "Perhifft Players" (from its full name, the Peretz Hirschbein Folk Theatre). Founded in 1920 as a Yiddish reading group, Perhifft grew to become a unique fixture on Milwaukee's cultural scene. As critic Dave Luhrssen wrote in his review of *To Lift Ourselves Up*: "By the time it celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1971, Perhifft was the longest running nonprofessional Yiddish theater in the world. Its amateur standing kept with the cutting-edge ethos of many Yiddish playwrights, who preferred nonprofessionals in the hope of achieving greater realism and avoiding the development of a star system." A world-class Yiddish theater in Milwaukee? Perhifft was just one example of a fascinating part of the linguistic diversity that has been the hallmark of the rich social and cultural history of Wisconsin's largest city.

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Looking back helps us look forward

By Cora Lee Kluge and Mark L. Louden, MKI Co-Directors

A happy development in the leadership of the MKI is marked by the shift of a single apostrophe to the right in "Directors' Corner." As of this fall, the MKI is being officially co-directed by both of us, Mark Louden and Cora Lee Kluge (who was profiled in the last newsletter). As longtime friends and colleagues from the German Department with a common interest in German-American studies, we are pleased to share the responsibilities of working with the MKI and CSUMC staff to advance our dual missions of outreach and research.

The highlight of our programming for the current fall semester will be "Tales of Contact and Change," our MKI/CSUMC conference to be held at the Pyle Center on November 11–13. Antje Petty has worked especially hard to plan and secure funding for this event, which will feature interesting panels and



performances. In the spirit of our ongoing goal of linking scholars with the general public, we look forward to seeing many Friends—and friends of Friends!—at the "Tales of Contact and Change" conference.

In advance of the fall term, the staff of MKI and CSUMC, joined by officers of the Friends Board, had a productive all-day retreat to take stock of where we are institutionally and where we would like to go in the short and long term. A major part of this retreat was breaking up into working groups devoted to three key areas of our activity: library/archives, outreach, and publications. So often during the course of the year we are being pulled in many different directions, making important a retreat such as this, where we're all in the same room at the same time, sharing what we're doing and what we want to achieve. We have come up with a number of ideas to continue moving our programming forward.

Finally, we need your help in identifying German-American topics that interest you, items that could be addressed in the Newsletter, or in lectures, or in publications. We would also welcome information about events around the state that the MKI could participate in. We are committed to our outreach mission, and it is clear to us that our plans for development are dependent upon our success in this area. Related to this, of course, is our ongoing need to strengthen our financial base. Because even such basic items as staff salaries and other core expenses must come from non-state-allocated funds, we must constantly keep in mind our need to work toward financial stability. Feedback from the Friends on how this can be approached will be gratefully accepted.

We wish you all a very happy fall, and thank you for your ongoing support of MKI!

Cora Lee and Mark

Max Kade Institute

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Ed Langer reprises role as Friends President

By Kimberly Ann Miller

During Ed Langer's second term of service on the Board of Directors, he missed a meeting—and was elected President for 2000–2001. Apparently, however, the experience was a pleasant one, since he consented to become President again this year. Ed has been a member of the Friends for over fifteen years. His interests as an amateur genealogist and historian led him to his first meeting, where several acquaintances of his were also in attendance.

Ed descends from German-speaking immigrants on both sides of his family. His mother is a first-generation immigrant; she was born in Switzerland. His father's grandparents were all born in the same county in the Sudetenland region of Bohemia and then moved to Wisconsin. Ed himself grew up on a dairy farm near Watertown, as the thirteenth of fourteen children. Because of the differences between his mother's and father's dialects, German was not spoken at home, but Ed did later acquire some German in high school and college. He has both Swiss and U.S. citizenship—he and his wife wanted to marry in Switzerland, and in the course of preparing the paperwork, Ed was informed that because of a reform in the Swiss naturalization laws, he was eligible for citizenship based on his mother's Swiss origin.

Through Ed's research, he found two uncles and an aunt in Switzerland. His research into the

history of his father's family has been quite extensive; he has not only traced his family lineage but also examined the migration patterns for the entire county. The population of this county in the Su-



Langer

detenland was about eighty percent German and twenty percent Czech, and most of the residents were Catholic, except for a few Czech Protestants. Ed has shown that a chain migration took place. Once emigration out of Bohemia became legal, the poor Czech Protestants, as those who occupied the most marginal position socially, were the first to leave; they went to Texas, but almost half of them died en route. The poor German Catholics moved next, and although Texas seems to have been their original goal, in the end they went to Wisconsin instead. The reason is unclear, but religious fac-

tors may have been crucial, especially the presence of German bishops in Milwaukee and Cincinnati. Later, in 1867, the wealthier German Catholics began to move, with their migration triggered by the hardships of the Austro-Prussian war. Prussian soldiers twice confiscated grain from Ed's great-grandfather Johann Langer. Those who moved to Wisconsin settled first near Watertown, but some then moved on to Pierce County and North Dakota. Ed has written an article on the results of his research, which is available on the Web, and he has also presented his work to a variety of audi-

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Learning about immigration across the Atlantic

By Antje Petty, MKI Assistant Director

At 8 a.m. on Thursday, June 17, the long awaited moment had finally arrived: a video link was established between Van Hise Hall on the UW–Madison campus and the University of Hannover in Germany. After months of preparation and two days of communication by chat and email, teachers on both continents were finally able to see each other and talk directly with one another.

The Madison group included social studies and German teachers from Wisconsin and Illinois. In Hannover, history and English teachers as well as university students from the state of Lower Saxony had gathered. Our first goal was to learn how to use *Lehrer Online*, the German Federal Ministry of Education’s Internet platform for teachers. In no time, participants—even non-German speakers—were able to navigate the platform, create their own profile page, chat rooms, discussion forums and email exchanges.

Our next goal was to learn as much as possible about immigration and the teaching of immigration in a short time. We began with a tour of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, arranged by Director of School Services, Bobbie Malone. The group not only saw samples of the vast holdings of the Society but was also introduced to teaching materials specifically developed from archival documents. In the following days, different scholars and teachers made presentations on a variety of topics:

- Joseph Salmons, former MKI Director, talked about German immigration to Wisconsin and the German language.
- Madeline Uranek, International Education Consultant at the Wisconsin Department of Public Education, introduced ways teachers can connect international education and local immigration in the classroom.
- Ruth Olson, Associate Director of the Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures, and Mark Wagler, teacher at Randall Elementary School in Madison,

presented a tour of seven Hmong communities in Wisconsin developed by 4th and 5th graders to learn about the background and culture of one of Wisconsin’s recent immigrant groups.

- Patricia Ehrkamp, Assistant Professor of Geography at Miami University (OH) took a look at different immigrant groups in Germany today.
- Bernd Klewitz, Language Consultant at the Goethe Institut Chicago, presented *Spurensuche*, a project created by the Goethe Institut Chicago to foster dialogue on current societal issues by looking at German-American cultural traces in the Midwest.
- Gary Greenberg, Director of the Collaboratory Project, Northwestern University, showed how the *Spurensuche* project can be implemented in the K–12 classroom, using the Collaboratory Platform.
- MKI Director Mark Loudon joined the teachers in Hannover and gave a talk on the Amish in America to both groups via video link.

There could not have been a more interested and engaged group of participants. American teachers had lively discussions with every presenter and among themselves. The German teachers reported a similar experience, and both groups identified questions and topics for transatlantic discussion and collaboration. Most teachers by now had identified colleagues with similar interests and had created small teams, which were exchanging experiences, giving advice, sharing resources and ideas, and making plans for future collaborations that would include their students. Topics ranged from discussions of the new “head scarf laws” in Germany to finding authentic historic documents on local emigration.

As the final product of the workshop, teams of teachers developed ideas for lessons that could

Yiddish in Milwaukee continued from Page 1

Before exploring more about the history of Yiddish in Milwaukee, a few words are in order about this familiar, yet often misunderstood language. The history of Yiddish is intertwined with the history of the Ashkenazim, a branch of Jewry originally associated with western and central Europe, especially its Germanic areas. During the Middle Ages, large numbers of German-speakers, including many Jews, left Central Europe for what they hoped would be better economic and social conditions in the mainly Slavic-speaking lands of the east. Though the facts are somewhat murky, we know that the newly arrived Ashkenazim formed new communities with coreligionists who had preceded them in Russia and Eastern Europe, people known in Jewish history as Knaanim. The traces of “Judeo-Slavic” speech (along with the name “Knaanim”) have long since disappeared. In time, all Eastern European Jews came to be known as “Ashkenazim,” and their primary language, “Yiddish.”

Yiddish has often been incorrectly labeled a dialect of German. To be sure, the similarities between the two languages are obvious, especially in the area of vocabulary. *Yidish*, for example, an adjective meaning “Jewish,” is of course quite similar to its distant German cousin *jüdisch*. But in the same way that English, German, Dutch, Norwegian, etc., are all regarded as distinct languages with shared roots, so too is Yiddish properly assigned to its own branch on the family tree of Germanic languages. The autonomy of Yiddish from its Germanic origins is underscored by its many

vocabulary items from non-Germanic languages, especially Hebrew and the closely related Semitic language, Aramaic, as well as various Slavic languages. On the most visible level, Yiddish’s uniqueness is expressed by its use of the Hebrew alphabet for writing.

In part because of its similarity to German, in part due to the enduring prestige of German as a language of culture and authority in many parts of Europe where Yiddish was spoken, Yiddish has had a difficult time asserting its status as a “real”

language.

Indeed, many Jews in Germany itself, especially during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, were inclined to look down on Yiddish in the same way that many German-speakers have disparaged nonstandard spoken dialects. This was no less the case in

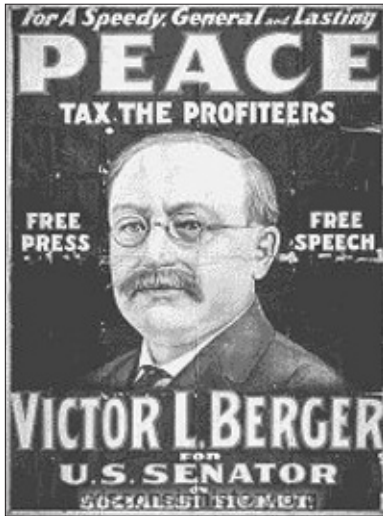


1916 meeting of Poale Zion Zionist organization of Milwaukee; Goldie Mabowitz (Golda Meir) is standing at the far right.

Milwaukee. The first Jews to arrive in the city were part of the larger migration of German-speakers to Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest in the mid-nineteenth century. The language these pioneers of the Milwaukee Jewish community brought with them was typically German. Only toward the end of the nineteenth century, with the arrival of large numbers of Jewish and non-Jewish Eastern Europeans, in North America generally did Yiddish become a part of the diverse linguistic tapestry of Milwaukee. While it was not unusual in Milwaukee for native speakers of Yiddish to learn German, as well as English, it was rare for a Jew growing up with German at home to also acquire Yiddish.

As in other parts of the country, notably New York City, Yiddish-speaking Jews in Milwaukee quickly became active in all spheres of public life:

business, politics, the arts, education, and journalism, as well as community service and philanthropy. Some very familiar names in Milwaukee history are part of the city's rich Yiddish-speaking heritage, including Ben Marcus; the Kohl family of grocery and department store and, more recently, sports and political fame; Esther Cohen, who, among her many achievements, was the first female teacher of mathematics at the Milwaukee



Victor Berger (1860–1929)

In the area of culture, the legacy of the dozens of gifted amateurs who performed with the Perhifft Players was mentioned above. Yiddish-speakers in Milwaukee who also enjoyed reading in their native language were well served by Isadore Horowitz, a journalist and publisher who brought out the *Milvoker Vokhenblat*, a sample of which is included in this newsletter. The headline for its April 6, 1915, issue reads as follows: *Ekstra! Rezultat fun hayntigen elekshon! Tsulib yon tev hoben zeyer vintsig idin gevout. Moris Stern bekumt mehr shtimen in idishen gegend vi eynige gegner tsuzamen. Idishe mener un froyen shtimen am mehrsten far sotsialistische kandidaten.* (Extra! Result of today's election! On account of the holiday [Passover], very few Jews voted. Morris Stern receives more votes in Jewish areas than all opponents combined. Jewish men and women vote mainly for socialist candidates.)

And since this is a fall newsletter, it is fitting to conclude this brief look at the history of Yiddish

School of Engineering; Victor Berger, one of the founders of the American Socialist Party and its first member in the nation elected to Congress; and the former Goldie Mabowitz, who became famous as Israel's first and to date only female prime minister: Golda Meir.

in Milwaukee with a poem in English translation, "Retrospect," by one of the great American Yiddish poets, Alter Esselin. An immigrant to Milwaukee from Russia in the early twentieth century, Esselin became famous as the "humble carpenter" by profession who wrote Yiddish poetry on his lunch breaks.



Alter Esselin (1889-1974)

Retrospect

Autumn. A few cold stars.
 As if through broken organ reeds
 The last symphony of summer is sounding.
 How many times the leaves have fallen
 On the ashen twilight of the grass.
 But there is inscribed a moment in memory
 By a gentle and steady hand,
 Time, place and things—
 Shavings on a turbulent stream.
 Even now I love to recall
 Like a sorrowful melody
 The half-forgotten name
 Of a peasant Anabel-Lee.
 Among white birches there is a path
 Where only the moon and the gnomes are
 awake,
 And far away there is a floating wake
 Of a solitary peasant and his cart.
 And something else; there is a tryst
 Beneath a bush where bodies will not rest.
 Body and body and blood like coral—
 And then a pathos of silence.
 Through a clouded film
 Two pairs of eyes in tears—
 And in the heart a lament like a psalm.

—by Alter Esselin (transl. Joseph Esselin)

August Willich: 48er, Civil War hero, Milwaukee Turners founder

by Frank Zeidler

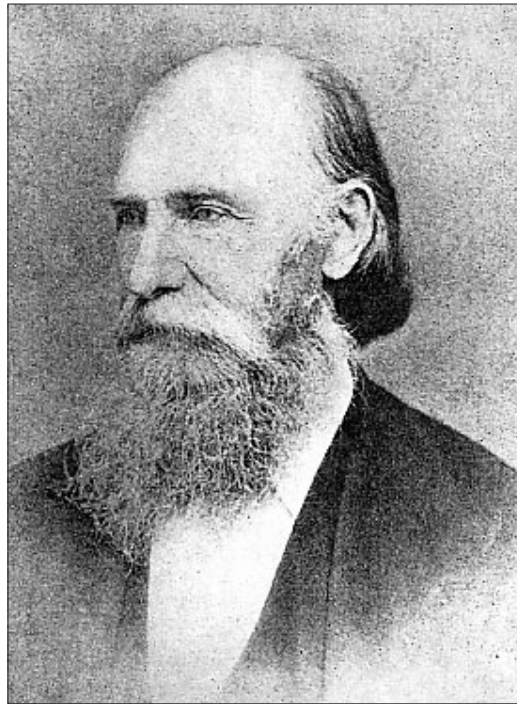
The celebration by the Milwaukee Turners of their 150th year focuses attention on the person whose 1853 talk to Milwaukeeans led to the formation of the *Socialer Turnverein*, now the Milwaukee Turners. That person was August Willich, then of Cincinnati, Ohio, but originally from Braunsberg, Prussia, where he was born November 19, 1810, in a family of lesser nobility. Willich was born August von Willich but later dropped the aristocratic “von” from his name, and became a revolutionary fighter for freedom. His father, an officer in the Hussars, died when August was three, and August went to live with his aunt who was married to Friedrich Schleiermacher, a famous German theologian and philosopher. At age twelve, August went to a cadet’s academy, and at age eighteen he was an officer in the Prussian artillery.

Over time Willich became interested in the republican movement in Germany and resigned from the military. During military actions of the 1848 liberal revolution of German states he commanded forces, but escaped to Switzerland after those forces were defeated by the Prussian army. He then went to London where he lived for four years and finally found his way to the United States, working as a carpenter in Brooklyn and finally as an editor in Cincinnati.

Willich was fluent in English and in German, and he gave well-informed talks about the Liberal movement in Germany and about the Turner movement’s ties to it. The record is not clear how he was invited to Milwaukee to speak about the Turner movement in 1853, but what is known is that after he spoke the *Socialer Turnverein* was formed in Milwaukee.

At the beginning of the Civil War, Willich—fifty years old at the time—enlisted as a private

in an Ohio regiment. His military experience and skill were clearly evident, and he soon was made a colonel commanding the 32nd Indiana Regiment. Willich and his regiment participated in many major battles, such as Shiloh, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, Murfreesboro, and Resaca. Willich’s ability to keep his troops steady under fire was a mark of his commanding ability, which brought him commendation by several generals and promotion. Official records reveal,



August Willich (1810-1878)

in measured prose, how highly Willich’s superiors regarded his efforts. General Lew Wallace, author of the famed *Ben Hur*, recognizing how Willich had saved Wallace’s entire brigade at Shiloh, wrote: “[F]or this favor my acknowledgments are especially due . . . August Willich and his regiment.” General William Tecumseh Sherman speaks of “the splendid regiment” and how its leader, Willich, for twenty minutes at Shiloh faced and overcame “the severest musketry fire I have ever heard.”

Willich was wounded several times during the Civil War. At the end of the war, Willich was a brevet brigadier general, and after the war was elevated to brevet major general, holding a command in Texas. News clippings from the Wisconsin press show that during the 1860s he was in Milwaukee and Madison giving speeches. He had a special tie to the Fifteenth Regiment of Wisconsin, a regiment with many persons of Scandinavian extraction.

After the Civil War and his Texas service, Willich returned to Germany where he volunteered

Hans Buschbauer's advice for the German-American gardener

By Kevin Kurdylo, MKI Librarian

As we enter into autumn, the season of harvest, let's take a look at a book a certain Hans Buschbauer put together with the aim of providing advice to German-American gardeners. Published in Milwaukee around 1892 by Brumber, the book's full title is *Amerikanisches Garten-Buch für Stadt und Land. Eine den amerikanischen Bedürfnissen angepasste, durch zahlreiche Original-Aufsätze vermehrte Zusammenstellung der in Christ's "Gartenbuch," Rümpler's "Gartenblumen" und anderen einschlagenden Werken enthaltenen Anleitungen zur Anlage des Hausgartens und zur Kultur der Gemüse, Obstbäume, Reben, Forstbäume und Blumen. Mit einem Anhang über Blumenzucht im Zimmer.* Combining original writings with selected relevant works previously published in Germany and adapted to suit the plants and conditions found in America (for instance, *Die Wisconsin Trauerweide*, or weeping willow, is described on pp. 318–319), this book addresses such general concerns as how to choose suitable locations, improve the soil, and devise efficient plans for various types of gardens and orchards, as well as the specific requirements for individual vegetables, fruits, vines, and owers.

The names Christ and Rümpler mentioned in the title refer to Johann Ludwig Christ (1739–1813) and Theodor Rümpler (1817–1891). Christ, apparently a minister, wrote several books about gardening and the growing of fruit trees as well as guides to insects, particularly bees. Rümpler was a specialist in cacti and succulents, but he was also a practical horticulturist and popular author on gardening.

And who was Hans Buschbauer? Information at the bottom of the title page indicates he is a "practical farmer" and the editor of the agricultural sections of the *Milwaukee Germania*, the *Chicago Deutsche Warte*, and the *Buffalo Volksblatt*. Other German-language books attributed to Buschbauer as an author or editor deal with poultry raising, beekeeping, and dairy farming—all with an eye toward American farmers—and he is also cited as having "gathered" material for an English-language memorial of the 1882 Industrial

Exposition and Grand Union Dairy Fair held in Milwaukee. Further investigation reveals that Buschbauer is a pseudonym, not all that surprising when one translates the name into English (bush farmer).

Hans Buschbauer is the pseudonym chosen by Francis [Franz] Arnold Hoffmann [or Hoffman], who lived from 1822 to 1903. According to some sites on the Internet, Hoffmann was born

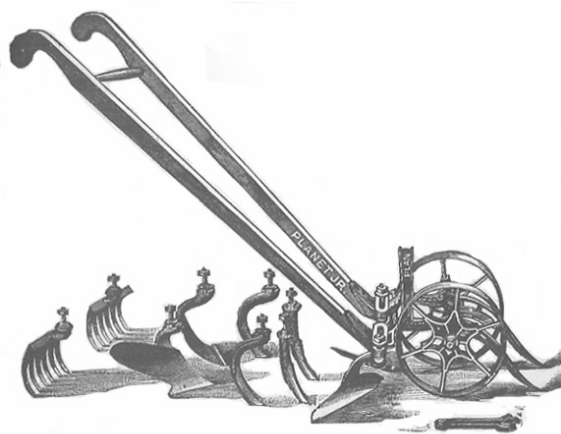


Fig. 6. Doppelttrahade.

A double-wheeled hoe.



Fig. 55.
Reis zum Halb-
spalttröpfen.

Fig. 56.
Halbspalttröpfen.

Fig. 57.
Einschnitt am Abblüding
zum Weisfußtröpfen.

Fig. 58.
Reis zum Weisfuß-
tröpfen.

Above: Examples of tree grafts.
Left: A method for supporting celery.

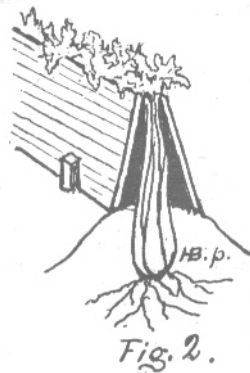


Fig. 2.

in Herford, Kreis Minden, Westphalia, and immigrated to the United States in 1840.

After teaching school in Addison, Illinois, he prepared for the Lutheran ministry—probably under Friedrich Schmid in Michigan. He served as a pastor in Addison until 1847, then move to Schaumburg,

Illinois, where he served until 1851. As one source wrote, “He not only served as spiritual leader to his flock, but was their interpreter of the new American way of life.” Hoffmann is identified as a co-founder of the Republican Party, and was elected as the first Republican lieutenant governor of Illinois during the Civil War. Certainly a very busy fellow, and yet his written works reveal a committed effort to share with others his enduring interest and vast knowledge in so many areas of agriculture.

The opening lines of *Amerikanisches Garten-Buch* has the practical musing: “Selten hängt es von unserer Willkür ab, einen recht geeigneten Platz zum Garten auswählen zu können, sondern wir müssen denselben meist nehmen, wie wir ihn finden” (It’s rare to be able to choose the best place for a garden, but instead we must take what we can find). Some conditions to hope for in an ideal location, however, are those that suit the climate and other conditions and which offer some degree of protection from rough northerly winds. Overall, it would be best to have a spot that “die Morgen- und Mittagssonne genießt” (enjoys morning and midday sun) and avoids being overmuch in shade.

One brief but interesting section is titled “Lauben, Gartenhäuschen, Ruhesitze und Spielplätze für Kinder im Garten” (bowers, gazebos, resting spots, and playgrounds for children in the garden). As we anticipate the arrival of cooler temperatures, it is pleasant to think of children

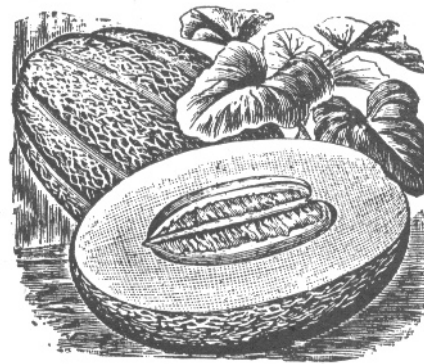


Dahlias.

playing in a warm, sunny garden. Buschbauer insists “für die Kinder soll der Garten insbesondere auch als Tummelplatz dienen” (the garden should especially serve also as a place for children to exercise), but cautions “die Wege im Garten sind hierzu aber meist zu schmal und werden, wenn die Kinder stets darauf spielen, auch sehr verdorben” (garden paths are often too narrow, and will become ruined if children play on them). He points out that it is advisable to create a free space for children, preferably a round area in a corner of the garden that can be surrounded with “gewöhnlicheren Gesträuchern” (commonplace shrubbery) and where “Schatten werfende Bäume” (shade-providing trees) can protect the children playing there

from the sun’s rays. Covering the area thickly with sand provides a low-maintenance option, “und Stunden lang beschäftigt sich damit die liebe

Jugend durch Höhlenbau, Kuchenbacken



Melons in the garden.

und so weiter” (and the dear youth can occupy themselves for hours digging caves, baking cakes, and so on). Ever conscious of the benefits of physical exercise, Buschbauer also recommends adding a swing as well as some gymnastic equipment.

There is much more in the *Amerikanisches Garten-Buch* than can be adequately discussed here, and the book is so lavishly illustrated—especially in the sections dealing with vegetables, fruits, and flowers—that I wanted to leave room to reproduce some of those images. But for anyone who wants to test his or her botanical and German knowledge, try matching the following German and English flower names (both are provided in the section on “Der Blumengarten”).

MKI Friend Dennis Boyer brings out new book

*We are pleased to announce that longtime MKI Friend, Dennis Boyer, has just published a new book, *Once Upon a Hex: A Spiritual Ecology of Pennsylvania Germans* (Badger Books, 2004).*

What follows is the press release from the publisher.

Wisconsin folklore author, Dennis Boyer, has taken up ghost stories of the Pennsylvania Germans or “Dutch” in his new book, *Once Upon a Hex*. Boyer offers up a folktale journey through nearly 300 years of America’s most enduring European American ethnic group.

The Berks County, PA, native draws upon his extensive knowledge of folk narrative tales that reveal a strong sense of place. Called the “Folktale Man” by various Midwest publications, Boyer has written extensively on heartland ghost stories, tavern tales, Great Lakes legends, and railroad lore.

In *Once Upon a Hex*, Boyer returns to the stories and places of his youth. Discover these folktales rooted in the spirituality of the Pennsylvania Dutch:

- The Trappe Hospital ghosts are the spirits of dead Revolutionary War soldiers who roam the area around Collegetown and Trappe. The private residences, churches, and inns that were commandeered to nurse the wounded now house the moans, low conversation, and faint shadows of limping spirits.

- The Red Lion miners in eastern Berks County. Several locals, including Old Gip from Alburts and Boyer’s great-uncle, Ollie Bauer, invite the spirits of miners entombed in a blasting accident into the bars of the local hotels with them.

- The Holtzam Orchard ghost. This ghost

shows a city woman how to create a nineteenth-century orchard that feeds both body and soul.

- The Cumberland Valley Railroad ghost. Carleton, a former rail yard maintenance worker on the CSX, tells of the spirit that stands with a carman’s bar and light attempting to conduct a rolling inspection of a nonexistent train.

- The shivaree ghosts of Kittatinny Mountain. They walk the ridges from Bloersville to New Ger-

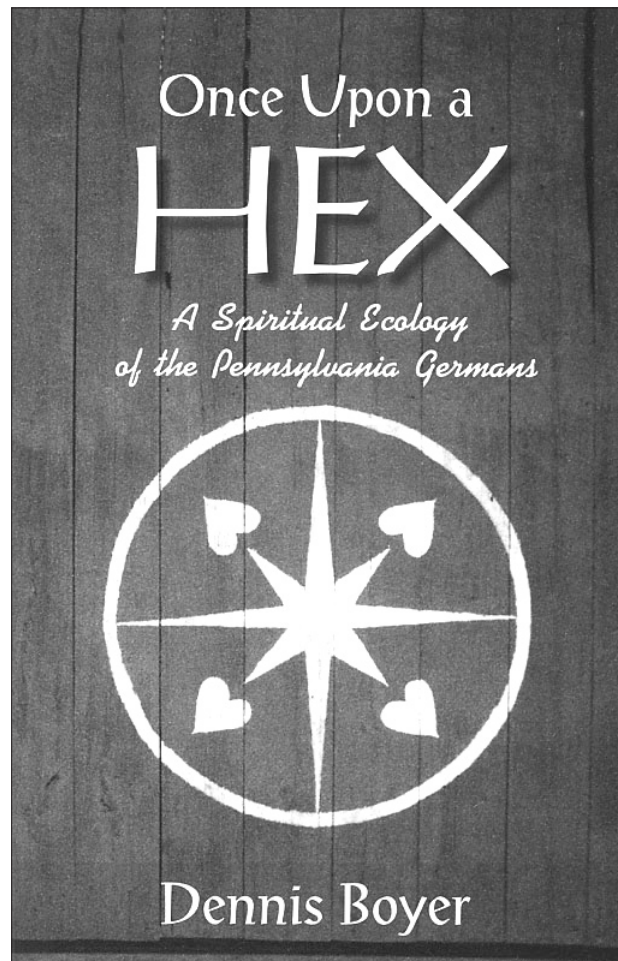
mantown to Stanger and initiate Dutch husbands outside their bedroom windows with sleigh bells, wash tub fiddles, bugles, and jugs.

Most of the tales are drawn from the “Dutch core” of southeast and south-central Pennsylvania. The book returns again and again to the love of the land through themes drawn from farming, gardening, hunting, fishing, and encounters with the original Native peoples. But it also explores past and present Pennsylvania German life in mine and mill, kitchen and workshop, tavern and farmers market.

Once Upon a Hex finds magic in the lives of these people. But it also

finds solid values including a strong work ethic, tolerance, and reverence.

For more information, including how to order *Once Upon a Hex* and or interview the author, go to www.badgerbooks.com or www.onceuponahex.com.



MKI lecture: 'Where American English Meets German: Devoicing in Pennsylvania D(e)ut(s)chified English'

By Joseph Salmons, CSUMC Co-Director

When traditionally German-speaking communities in North America switch to English, does a “German accent” of sorts linger even among the younger generations who speak only English? On September 9, Stuart Davis presented a paper co-authored with Vickie Anderson (both are from Indiana University in Bloomington) that begins to answer this question for a dialect of American English from Pennsylvania.

Looking at a dialect from formerly Pennsylvania Dutch-speaking areas they call “Pennsylvania D(e)ut(s)chified English” (PDE), Davis and Anderson find a likely candidate for German in uence: German speakers do not distinguish pairs of sounds like *t* from *d* or *s* from *z* at the ends of words, so that German *Rad* ‘wheel’ and *Rat* ‘advice’ are pronounced just the same in natural speech. More specifically, sounds like *b, d, g, z* all “devoice” or become *p, t, k, s* in this position. Of course this pattern is a common part of a “German accent” in English, where *bed* can be pronounced like *bet*, and so on. Davis and Anderson find that PDE speakers use this same pattern, pronouncing *leave* and *leaf* or *tug* and *tuck* the same way.

So far, then, it sounds like we have a simple case of German in uence on this American English dialect, but speakers of this dialect also extend devoicing to the middle of words like *dizzy* and *habit*, which they pronounce like *dissy* and *hapit*. (The details turn out to be more complicated, for

example, with *d* which does not devoice in words like *reduce* or *address*.) This pattern is not only unlike other varieties of English, but it does not seem to resemble what we find in any German dialect. They argue that these pronunciations of Pennsylvania Dutchified English speakers can only be understood by the interaction of patterns from German final devoicing and patterns from American English: English speakers “aspirate” *p, t, and k* (that is, we have a puff of air when we pronounce them) only in certain positions – like the *p* in *pin* but not in *happen*. Davis and Anderson argue that sounds like *b, d, g* devoice in PDE in almost exactly the same environments where American English *p, t, k* are not aspirated. To understand how this dialect works, then, requires a detailed understanding of complex sound patterns in both German (and its dialects) and American English.

Davis also gave a University Lecture on “The Language-Related Writings of Francis Lieber: A Humboldtian Linguist in Antebellum America.” Lieber was a German immigrant and friend of the Humboldts who did some of the most important early descriptions of Pennsylvania German, along with other wide-ranging research like compiling important lists of early Americanisms (that is, features of North American English that differ from those in Great Britain), the speech of slaves in South Carolina, and the language of a deaf-mute-blind girl.

August Willich continued from Page 7

for the Prussian army in the Franco-Prussian War. Now in his sixties, he was not accepted. He returned to the United States and went to live in the small city of St. Mary’s, Ohio, southwest of Lima. There he was known for his interest in Shakespeare. Willich died at St. Mary’s on January 22, 1878, and is buried there. He never married.

In the Wisconsin region the writings and thoughts of August Willich are not readily

available so we do not know what he said that inspired the formation of the Turners. We do know he was firmly committed to democracy and unfriendly to monarchies. In encouraging the formation of a Turner society in Milwaukee, Willich gave the impetus for political freedom to Milwaukee and Wisconsin.

Thanks to Gretchen Rosing and Fritz Schmidt for forwarding this essay.

Tales of Contact and Change: An MKI conference and storytelling event

Mark your calendars for an exciting three days of storytelling!

From Thursday, November 11, through Saturday, November 13, regional storytellers and international scholars will share and explore traditional narratives of immigration.

This free public event will be held in the Pyle Center on the UW–Madison campus.


We will begin Thursday night with a reception and opening keynote address by Jack Zipes, professor of German and Folklore at the University of Minnesota: *To Be or Not To Be Eaten: The Survival of Traditional Storytelling*. Over the next two days, there will be numerous panel discussions and presentations, culminating in two entertaining story concerts on Friday and Saturday nights. With an emphasis on the Upper Midwest, many contributions will deal with the German-American experience, including stories from Milwaukee's German taverns or the letter-based novels of Pomeranian immigrants. You will find a detailed program below. For driving directions, details on presenters, abstracts, and other information, please log on to our Web site: <http://mki.wisc.edu> or contact Antje Petty (apetty@wisc.edu) for additional information.

Tales of Contact and Change Program Overview

Thursday, November 11

6:00 p.m.	Reception	12:15–1:30	Lunch Break
7:00 p.m.	Keynote Address <i>To Be or Not To Be Eaten: The Survival of Traditional Storytelling</i> (Jack Zipes)	1:30–3:00	Panel Discussion: <i>Contact and Cultural Adaptation in Traditional Stories</i>
		3:15–5:15	Presentations

Friday, November 12

8:30–9:00	Introductory remarks (Mark Louden)		1. <i>Memories of Contact: A Discussion of the Earliest Recorded Memories of Contact among the Ojibwe and the Cree</i> (Theresa Schenk)
9:00–10:30	Panel Discussion: <i>Stories and the Preservation of Languages and Dialects</i>		2. <i>Pomeranians in the Sugarbush: The Low German Immigrant Experience in Alfred Ira's Novels</i> (Helmut Schmahl)
10:30–10:45	Break		3. <i>Storytelling in a Multicultural Society or Preserving Tradition? Immigrant Storytellers in Germany</i> (Katrin Pöge-Alder)
10:45–12:15	Presentations 1. <i>How DARE Can Help You Understand and Appreciate Storytelling and Folklore</i> (August Rubrecht) 2. <i>Special English for Special Purposes: The Cultural Relevance of German-American Literary Dialect</i> (Holger Kersten)	7:00–9:00 p.m.	Story Concert: <i>Stories of Cultural Contact</i> Mai Zong Vue (Hmong Stories of Cultural Adaptation) Jeffrey Lewis (Stories of African-American Internal-U.S. Migration)

Elaine Wynne (Stories from the Minnesota Frontier: A Northern European Immigrant Community and Its Interface with People from the Red Lake Indian Reservation)
 Mark Wagler (Stories of Growing Up Amish-Mennonite)
 Moderator: Rick March

Saturday, November 13

- 8:30–10:00 **Panel Discussion: *Children Learning from Stories***
- 10:00–10:15 Break
- 10:15–12:00 **Presentations**
1. *Stories from the Chicago South Side* (John Berquist from the Chicago “After School Matters” program)
 2. *An Egyptian Tomb, a Mbuti Myth, a Xhosa Epic, and an Appointment in Havana: A Storytelling Odyssey* (Harold Scheub)
- 12:00–1:30 Lunch
- 1:30–3:00 **Panel Discussion: *Stories, Language and Ethnic Identity***
- 3:00–3:15 Break
- 3:15–4:45 **Presentations**
1. *Narratives from the Midwest in Yiddish Literature* (Itzik Gottesman)
 2. *European Folk Culture in the Fiction of the New World: The Letter-based Novel “Jürnjakob Swehn Travels to America”* (Christoph Schmitt)
- 7:00–9:00 p.m. **Story Concert: *Community and Humor in Stories***
- Earl Nyholm (Ojibwe Stories, Puns and Jokes)
 Larry Johnson (Stories and Jokes from a Swedish-American Community)
 Elfriede Haese (German Tavern Stories from Milwaukee)
 August Rubrecht (Stories in the Ozark Tradition)
 John Berquist (Stories and Folk Songs from the Iron Range)
 Moderator: Mark Wagler

New Library Acquisitions

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

Many thanks to Doris Baumann-Harder, the Free Congregation (Freie Gemeinde) of Sauk City and the Park Hall Preservation Foundation, Paula Gardina, James P. Leary, Joyce Hasselman Nigbor, Helmut Schmahl, and JoAnn Tiedemann (in memory of David Erceg, Waldsee Koch, and founder of the Concordia Language Villages food service program) for their donations.

—Kevin Kurdylo

Friends Profile continued from Page 3

ences.

In addition to his involvement with the Friends, Ed is a member of the 125-year-old Liederkrantz German chorus in Milwaukee. He has sung with this group for twenty-five years. Otherwise, time with his son David Friedrich is a high priority. Before his son's birth, Ed was active in outdoor events, skiing the Birkebeiner twice and enjoying cross-state bicycle trips and tennis.

Professionally, Ed was an attorney for the IRS for many years, until he blew the whistle on racial targeting. He then stayed home to care for his son for some time, and now does tax writing.

Looking ahead to his work as President this year, Ed expects that fundraising will be a priority. Funds raised by the Friends not only contribute directly to the work of the Max Kade Institute, but also can be used to elicit matching funds from other sources.

In addition to his involvement with the Friends, Ed is also a member of the 125-year-old Liederkrantz German chorus in Milwaukee. He has sung with this group for twenty-five years.

How do I know what it says? Deciphering old German documents

Dear Friends,

Welcome to a new segment of our newsletter: *The Genealogy Corner!* This column will feature information for those of you researching your German-American ancestors. Please contact us if there are specific topics you would like us to address in future columns.

If you have German-speaking ancestors you might have asked the same question. You have found an old letter, a baptism certificate, a diary or a travel document, but not only is the document in German, it is written in a script that even most native German speakers cannot read today. Sometimes you will even find several different scripts and typefaces in one and the same document, for example: a passport that includes a printed form in *Fraktur*, blanks filled in in the handwriting of a civil servant and maybe—in yet a different writing style—information added by the passport bearer. What to do? You can find information and help on MKI's Web site.

Web Resources

Go to <http://mki.wisc.edu> and you will find links to Web sites that provide sample fonts and historical information or teach you how to read the old German script. Click on "Genealogy" and then at the bottom of the page click on "More Resources."

Sample links

Old German Script/Alte deutsche Handschriften

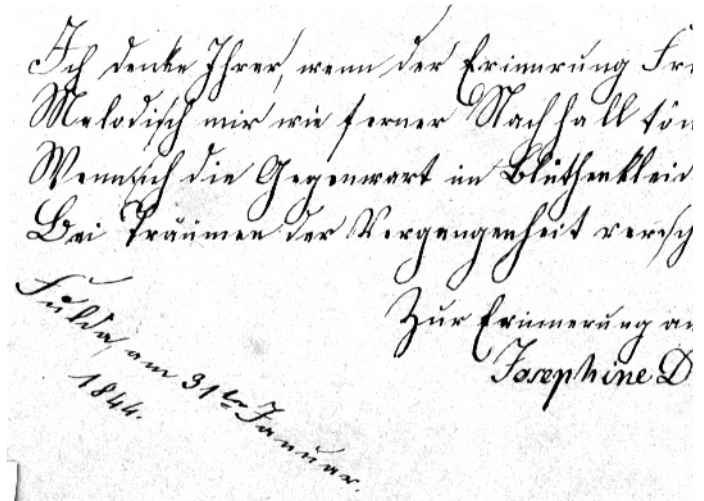
Includes samples of scripts, downloadable fonts, and bibliography of recommended readings.

Learn Suetterlin

Good explanations in English and lots of examples.

Handwriting Guide: German Gothic Resource Guide

An LDS Family History Web site. This guide introduces common Gothic letters, type, and handwriting used in German records. Also provides a



list of recommended readings.

German Script Alphabet Chart

Includes samples of scripts, downloadable fonts, and bibliography of recommended readings.

14 Free German Fonts

Helpful in learning to read old German scripts.

Download Suetterlin Font

Helpful in learning to read old German scripts.

Suetterlinstube

Offers free transcription of texts written in old German handwriting into modern roman type. Contributions based on value of service provided greatly appreciated.

Further, there is an article on the Old German Script in the Spring 2002 issue of the Friends newsletter which can also be found online: on the MKI home page, click on "Friends" and then on "Newsletter."

Transcription and Translation Services

Unfortunately, the Max Kade Institute cannot offer transcription or translation services. However, we do keep a list of people in the Madison area who provide these services for a fee. Click on "Genealogy" and then on "local referral list."

Workshop

MKI is planning a workshop on German script for spring 2005. Look for details in your next newsletter or contact Kevin Kurdylo (kkurdylo@wisc.edu) to be notified by email.

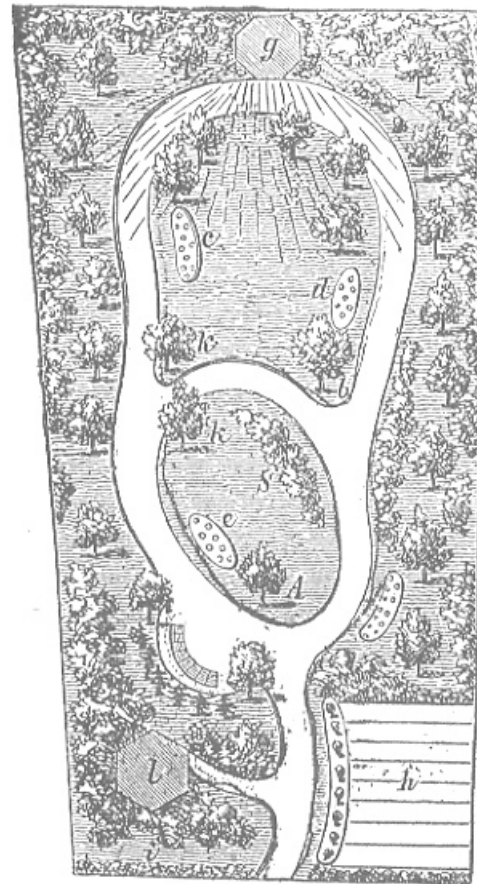
Collection Feature continued from Page 9

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Die Flammenblume | A. Marigold |
| 2. Die Gartenwinde | B. Poppy |
| 3. Das Löwenmaul | C. Larkspur |
| 4. Mohn | D. Morning Glory |
| 5. Die Ringelblume | E. Pansy |
| 6. Der Rittersporn | F. Snapdragon |
| 7. Das Stiefmütterchen | G. Phlox |
| 8. Schwertlilien | H. Iris |



Snaphragons.

Answers
1G, 2D, 3F, 4B, 5A, 6C, 7E, 8H



A multi-use garden plan.

Learning about Immigration continued from Page 4

be co-taught in Germany and America. Teachers were very aware of the challenges facing such a project. For example: the language barrier (few American students know German, not all German students are fluent in English); the seven-hour time difference (when American kids start school, German students go home); technical challenges (German schools are not nearly as well equipped as most American schools). They found interesting ways to deal with these challenges in lesson plans such as “Multiculturalism in Our Community,” “Nineteenth-Century Immigration in Pictures” or “Immigrant Children in Young Adult Literature.”

Overall this first Transatlantic Teacher Training workshop was a great success. All participants indicated they would like to see another workshop offered soon, if possible one including teachers and their students. We are working on it!

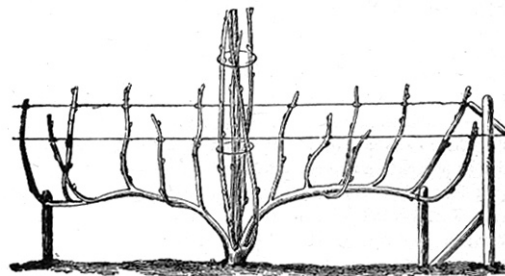


Fig. 83. Weinstock, nach dem verbesserten Rahmenchnitt gezogen.

Example of a support for grapevines.

Yiddish in Milwaukee continued from Page 6

Sources: Night and Day: Remembering Milwaukee’s Yiddish Theater (Shepherd Express, 3/2/2000), by Dave Luhrssen; The History of the Jews of Milwaukee, by Louis J. Swichkow and Lloyd P. Gartner; “The Golden Land”: 150 Years of Jewish Life in Milwaukee, by Ruth Traxler; www.esselin.com.

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Please make check payable to: Friends of the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies or Friends of the MKI. Mail this form and your check to the Friends of the Max Kade Institute, 901 University Bay Drive, Madison, WI 53705. THANK YOU!!!

<u>Membership Category (annual)*</u>		<u>Amount Enclosed</u>
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* Memberships received after November 1 of the current year will be credited for the full succeeding year.

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