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SUMMER 2023 VOL. 38 NO. 2



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SUMMER 2023 VOL 38 NO. 2

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The mission of the German American Heritage Center is to preserve and enrich for present and future generations knowledge of the German immigrant experience and its impact on American culture.

OUR PRESIDENT WRITES Dear members and friends,

Guten Tag!

This summer has been a busy one at the GAHC! I would first like to send our sincere thanks to everyone who graciously donated money for the center through the Birdies for Charity campaign. These funds greatly help our ability to continue offering quality programs and outreach. Additionally, we would like to thank John Deere for augmenting these donations for all of the local nonprofits. This program, and the donations that go through it, truly benefit our center and the greater community.

We also have a new team member at the GAHC. We welcome Aaron Baker as our new Education and DEAI Coordinator. His prior experience in the field of education will prove to be invaluable as we continue to grow our educational outreach and DEAI initiatives. Please extend to him a warm welcome on your next visit to the GAHC.

We have new exhibits coming to the center. Two temporary exhibits which are particularly interested center around Mexican immigration. Why the GAHC and Mexican immigration? My opinion is that their experiences and those of our German ancestors are very similar. Many connections between the two can be made, and many Germans immigrated to Mexico as well (can you imagine mariachi music without the accordion?). I would encourage everyone to come see these exhibits and experience the programs that we will be having in conjunction with them.

Viele Grüße,

Daniel Cabage



Cover Image: Portion of Miriam Alarcón Avila's installation on the 4th floor. This display combines elements from our collection, such as this early 20th century Gritzner hand-operated sewing machine as well as elements important to present-day immigrants. Featuring an original quilt made by Avila, dedicated to 20 year old Cristian Martinez of Muscatine, whose body was found in Iowa City earlier this year.

A Tale of Two Cultures

This summer the German American Heritage Center and Museum has two exhibitions on view that tell stories of the Mexican immigrant experience, *Los Desconocidos: The Migrant Quilt Project* and *Todos Somos Luchadores Immigrantes (We Are All Immigrant Warriors).* Both exhibitions, on view through August 27th, focus on various stories of Mexican immigration. The Migrant Quilt Project utilizes quilts, which have historically been used to communicate and pass down ideas, to memorialize the stories of migrants who have died seeking refuge in the United States. There are five of these beautifully, touching quilts on display in our third floor gallery.

We Are All Immigrant Warriors is an exhibition of artworks by Iowa City-based artist, Miriam Alarcón Avila. Avila, who has recently had her works on view at Western Illinois University and St. Ambrose University, has enlivened our fourth floor gallery space with art that uses the luchador, or Mexican wrestler, as a metaphor for the immigrant spirit.

We believe that these two exhibitions help to show similarities between immigrant groups. Whether it be war, religious persecution, violence, or famine, the desire to create a better life for one's family is not new, nor will we be done with these human struggles anytime soon. The story we tell of the German Immigrant Experience is a powerful one, and its impact is deepend and enriched when connected to other cultural groups, where we can demonstrate the contributions made by immigrants from many countries and from varied backgrounds to the ethnic palette which is the United States of America.



Companion Programs

July 23rd, 2023 I 12:00-4:00 pm | FREE Family Free Day, Artist talk, live music, food, kids activities July 27th, 2023 | 6:00 pm | Talk: *My Immigration Story: A Panel Discussion* | FREE for members, \$5 for non-members. Register on *eventbrite.com*

August 13th, 2023 | 2:00 pm | Film Showing: Craft in America Quilts | FREE | Register on eventbrite.com

Klassiks for Kinder GERMAN TOYS WITH JOY

Toys have been an integral part of childhood for centuries and have played a significant role in children's development. German toys, in particular, have had a significant impact on children's playtime experiences. From the popular Froebel (also spelled Fröbel) wooden blocks to the iconic Steiff teddy bears, German toys have been enjoyed by children all over the world.

German toys have been renowned for their quality, craftsmanship, and attention to detail for centuries. The country's rich history of toy making dates back to the 16th century, when wooden toys were crafted by skilled artisans. Since then, Germany has become a global leader in the toy industry, producing a wide range of toys that are both innovative and durable.

German toys are special because they combine quality materials, educational value, imaginative play, and a rich tradition of craftsmanship. It's no wonder they have become such an iconic part of the toy industry.



Bauschule block set. Museum purchase.



Toys help children develop their motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Playing with toys that require movement, such as building blocks or balls, can help children develop these essential skills. Toys can foster creativity and imagination. Whether it's a set of colored pencils or a dress-up box, toys can inspire children to explore new worlds and express themselves in new ways. In addition to their developmental benefits, toys are also a source of comfort and joy. They can provide a sense of security and familiarity, especially during times of stress or change.

As children grow, their toys often hold a special place in their hearts, and even as adults, they can bring back a sense of nostalgia and fond memories. Many adults still have their childhood toys and cherish them as a reminder of their past. Toys are an essential part of childhood, and German toys have left a lasting impression on generations of children worldwide.

This exhibition celebrates and showcases the wide range of toys that have come from German manufacturers or have been inspired by German design. Colorful displays and many hands-on stations to try some of these toys for yourself, this exhibition is abundant with wonder and imagination for both children and adults.

Klassiks for Kinder: German Toys with Joy will open on August 13th, 2023 and be on display through January 7th, 2024.

Companion Program

In-person Lecture: **History of Toy Making in Germany** with Ellen Tsagaris JD, PhD Sunday, August 20th, 2023 | 2:00 pm | FREE for members, \$5 for non-members. Register on *eventbrite.com*

upcoming exhibition ART FROM THE ARCHIVES

KARL SCHMALHAUS EXHIBITS PICTURES

Karl Schmalhaus has an exhibit of some 50 pictures in water colors, postels and oils at the Public library gallery, which will be found of more than usual interest. Mr. Schmalhaus has discovered scenes in and around Davenport that have offered wonderfully beautiful effects that have tempted his brush and in "Sun Kissed Oaks," warm with the glow of the set, ting sun on leaves which Jack Frost has kissed. "A Misty Morning," 2 scene across "Goose Hollow;" "Along McManus Creek in October;" "Mossy Bank at Devil's Glen," recalling to many the happy hunting ground of picnickers; "Clay Hill," a sunny picture full of light and atmosphere; "October morning on Mitchell's Bluff;" "E'loody Hollow" on a late afternoon, and "North of Fejervary Park," a view from Parisian Garden, one will recognize local scenes that the artist's brush has caught beautiful effects of sunset and autumn mist, early morning in the fields, the suggestion of rain and wind blown clouds, or the sun shimmering through the trees across grassy slopes and open mead-OWS.

Among the most attractive are the "End of a Rainy Day," "A Misty Morning," looking across to the Immaculate Conception academy with its bower; "The Clay Hill," and "Sunkissed Oaks."

The visitor will find many pictures to linger over and to go back to and enjoy again, for the exhibit is very well worth while.

Above: This news clipping describes some of Schmalhaus' pieces when they were exhibited at the public library in 1915. Quad City Times, Davenport, Iowa, December 15th, 1915. Over the years, the German American Heritage Center and Museum has been fortunate enough to acquire a number of artworks of considerable historical significance. Now, for the first time, we are pleased to present a bona-fide art exhibit consisting of pieces from our own collection. *Art from the Archives* combines beautiful examples of German artwork with local art created by German immigrants and their descendants.

The focal point of this exhibition is a large painting by Friedrich Kaiser, a German painter with a special interest in history, especially military subjects. Titled, *Frederick II, King of Prussia Reviewing a Parade of Troops with his Generals before the City of Potsdam,* this work will be on view for the first time here at the museum. This piece was examined extensively in the Winter 2022 edition of the *Infoblatt,* recently after it was acquired.

In addition to Kaiser's work, this exhibition features many local pieces made by artists who lived or settled in Scott County. Karl Schmalhaus, perhaps one of Davenport's most notable painters, was known for his serene landscapes. A Prussian soldier in the 1870 Franco-Prussian conflict, Schmalhaus became a well-regarded artist once he settled in Davenport in the late 19th century. It is possible that his peaceful nature scenes provided some escape from a turbulent past. *Art from the Archives* will feature three of Schmalhaus' pieces.

You can see Schmalhaus' landscape paintings and more on display from September 10th, 2023 through February 18th, 2024 in our 3rd floor gallery.



Karl Schmalhaus Prussian, 1857-1937 Autumn on the Hills c. 1890-1900 2012.043.1 A



Karl Schmalhaus Prussian, 1857-1937 No Title (Winter Scene) c. 1890-1900 2012.043.1 B

Companion Programs

In-person Lecture: **Frederick the Great** with David Ellis Ph.D. Sunday, November 5th, 2023 | 2:00 pm | FREE for members, \$5 for non-members

In-person Lecture: **Music of Frederick the Great** with Jacob Bancks Ph.D. Sunday, November 12th, 2023 | 2:00 pm | FREE for members, \$5 for non-members

German Language Resources

Looking for engaging ways to start learning German? Or perhaps ways to keep your existing skills up to scratch? What better way to work towards those goals than by reading classic fairy tales in German? Here are a few of our favorite resources to start and continue your learning:

Märchen in Leichter Sprache | NDR.de - Fernsehen - Barrierefreie Angebote

Norddeutscher Rundfunk (NDR, Northern German Broadcasting) has a page dedicated to making fairy tales more accessible for German speakers of all levels.

Notable feature: reading and listening options for each of the 12 tales available.

Grimms Märchen (www.grimmstories.com/de)

For those looking for more challenging material, this site is a good option. With all of the Brothers Grimm fairy tales available, as well as many of Hans Christian Andersen's, it would take even the most advanced learners a while to get through all the material.

Notable features: Random option, 18 languages supported, additional translations may be submitted via email.

Maerchen.com

Includes selections from the Brothers Grimm, Andersen, Ludwig Bechstein, and Johann Wilhelm Wolf. Notable feature: range of difficulty across many texts.

Dict.cc

This online English-German dictionary is a good resource not only for looking up unfamiliar words, but also for learning and reviewing new vocabulary using lists created by users from around the world. Notable features: quizzes, vocabulary trainers, forum, support for 25 languages.

German Proverbs

Die Weisheiten vieler Generationen *The Wisdom of Many Generations* Featuring German proverbs and quips about family life, true then and today.

Zwei Dinge sollten Kinder von ihren Eltern bekommen: Wurzeln und Flügel. (Goethe) Children should receive two things from their parents: roots and wings.

Der Erwachsene achtet auf Taten, das Kind auf Liebe. The adult responds to deeds, the child to love.

Sobald es etwas zu erben gibt, erkennt man den wahren Charakter der Menschen. As soon as there is something to be inherited one recognizes the true character of people.

Familie heißt, ein Teil von etwas Wunderbares und Einmaliges zu sein. Family means to be part of something wonderful and unique.

Ein Kind ist eine kleine Hand, die zurückführt in eine Welt, die man vergessen hat. A child is a little hand that leads back into a world which one has forgotten.

Wenn die Familie beisammen ist, dann ist die Seele auf ihrem Platz. When the family is together, then the soul is at rest.

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Treasured Tales You Know... and Thanks To a German

A RECURRING FEATURE IN WHICH WE HIGHLIGHT AN INVENTION OR COMPANY WITH GERMAN ROOTS.

In this issue we feature three authors from German speaking backgrounds who contributed immensely to the world of children's literature and remain popular yet today. Please take a summer stroll down memory lane, and then reach out to a young family member or friend and continue to share the enduring legacies of these notable authors.

Wanda Gag (1893-1945)

Wanda was born in the Germanspeaking community of New Ulm, Minnesota. (This special place is currently featured in our first exhibit gallery as "Neighbors to the North" through July 30th). The eldest of seven children, Wanda was struck by tragedy at age 15 when her father died. With the family on welfare, the social pressure was intense for her to guit school and work to support the family. She continued school and graduated in 1912, having published her first illustrated children's story during that time. She was mentored and supported at the St. Paul School of Art and won a scholarship to the Art Students League of New York. By 1919 she was a professional commercial illustrator. Through the 1920s her work became syndicated in newspapers and she began to sell her lithographs, linoleum block prints, watercolors and drawings in a gallery.

Her focus on children's books earned her lasting fame. Two of the books were awarded Newbery Honors and two received Caldecott Honors, the highest accolades in the genre. She achieved lasting fame in 1928 with *Millions of Cats,* which remains on the New York Public Library's list of 100 Great Children's Books. She also translated and illustrated two volumes of *Tales from Grimm* to encourage the reading of the classic German fairy tales.

Wanda enjoyed living and working in the country where she spent her summers. She first rented farms in rural New York and Connecticut, then bought a larger farm in New Jersey in 1931. Wanda Gag died in New York City in 1946 at age 53.

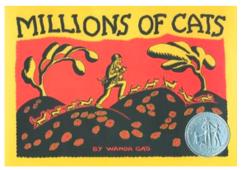
H. A. Rey (1898-1977) and Margret Rey (1906-1996)

Hans Augusto Reversbach was born in Hamburg, Germany and met his wife Margret at her sister's 16th birthday party. Both were German Jews. They met again in Brazil where he was working as a bathtub salesman and Margret had immigrated to escape the rise of Nazism. They married in 1935 and moved to Paris the same year, living in Montmartre. In 1940 they escaped on bicycles Hans had cobbled together, just hours before the city fell to the Nazis. Among their meager possessions was the first manuscript of *Curious George*, which they had been working on as a couple.

Hans, Margret, and George fled to

southern France, then to Spain, then on to Lisbon from which they sailed back to Brazil. From there they continued on to New York, always protecting the origins of their first book. It was published by Houghton Mifflin in 1941 and was an instant success. They wrote a total of seven stories featuring George and the Man in the Yellow Hat, Hans focusing on the cartoon-like images and Margret working on the texts. Although they shared the work and fully cooperated on each project, Margret's name was often left off the covers. Later editions were changed to grant her full credit for her contributions.

In 1963 the Reys relocated to Cambridge, MA where they lived in a house near Harvard Square until Hans' death in 1977. Margret died in 1996 at age 90.



Copies of *Millions of Cats* are available in the gift shop. \$8.99 each. *Member price 10% off:* \$8.09

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Ludwig Bemelmans (1898-1962) Ludwig Bemelmans was born in northern Italy in 1898. At this time the region was part of the Austrian empire and ruled by Vienna. Ludwig endured a turbulent childhood and youth. His father abandoned his mother prior to his birth, and she returned to her hometown of Regensburg, Germany with Ludwig and his brother. Ludwig's first language was French, his second was German.

His school years were difficult as he could not tolerate the strict classroom discipline of the time. He was apprenticed to an uncle who owned a hotel, and he began to learn the hospitality trade, beginning in table service as a busboy. Quarrels with the vicious headwaiter were frequent, and one episode caused Ludwig to retaliate to a whipping with an assault which seriously injured the man. He was given a choice of reform school or a ticket to America to rejoin his father. He chose the latter. He arrived at age 16 in 1914 and waited for his father, who never showed up. He spent Christmas Eve alone on Ellis Island, then began to seek work in the city's hotels. He earned enough money to travel to Glacier National Park and then joined the US Army, where he achieved the rank of Second Lieutenant.

After World War I he returned to New York and resumed work in hotels, achieving some notable positions in the kitchen of the Ritz Carlton. He also began many friendships with the artists and writers who frequented the hotel, and began to spend his free hours in those pursuits. He published his first self-illustrated children's book Hansi in 1934. After a trip to Paris in 1939 and a chance encounter with a young girl who had just been hospitalized with a burst appendix, he penned and illustrated the first of seven highly successful Madeline books. It was published by Simon and Schuster that same year and featured a similar story line.

The sequels were published between 1953 and 1961, and additional titles were continued by Ludwig's grandson John Bemelmans Marciano. Over 15 million copies of the books have been sold worldwide in multiple languages. They all begin with the same passage, "In an old house in Paris that was covered in vines, lived twelve little girls in two straight lines." Redheaded Madeline, age 7, continues to enchant many youngsters yet today with all her adventures.



The cover to the original 1939 Madeline children's book.



Willkommen Aaron

As we bid farewell to Jessica Gordon, we are excited to welcome Aaron Baker aboard!

Aaron comes to the GAHC as the Education and DEAI Coordinator with over 12 years experience in the field of education. After receiving a Bachelor's Degree in Secondary Integrated Social Studies from the University of Akron, he has taught a variety of courses to both High School and Elementary age students. His experience in the classroom includes teaching High School History Courses spanning from Ancient to Modern History, Beginning Latin and Spanish and also teaching various electives including Psychology and World Cultures. Overall, his particular areas of study of most interest are the World Wars and Linguistic and Cultural History. He also has years of experience in the area of the Theatrical Arts as he has performed in over 30 productions and has served as High School Drama Director for 10 years. Aaron has lived in the Quad Cities for the past 6 years and is coming directly to the GAHC after serving as the Upper School History and Drama Teacher at Morning Star Academy. In this new position, he is looking forward to contributing to the rich cultural and historical legacy of the GAHC and working with the schools of the Quad Cities to further ensure that this legacy is continued in future generations.

Volunteering

We are so thankful for our volunteers and the way they support the mission and goals of the GAHC! We truly could not do it without you! Whether you are interested in volunteering for the first time, are desiring to return to volunteering or want new opportunities to volunteer; we are always interested in gaining volunteer help. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering, please contact Aaron Baker at **aaron@gahc.org**.



Flag Maintenance at the Center



The American and German flags that fly everyday at the German American Heritage Center require periodic maintenance. The flags wear out and become tattered after a few months of sun, wind and rain. The ropes (called lanyards) wear out, too. Even the brass clips that attach the flag to the lanyard, wear out after a few years. When the lanyard or hooks break, we need help reaching the top of the pole, and call Koehler Electric, who sends a bucket truck and an experienced operator. The operator ascends to the top of the flagpole and threads a new lanyard into the pulley mechanism and feeds the rope down into the inside of the pole. That pulley mechanism is called a "truck" and is more complex than one might guess. The German American Heritage Center extends a sincere Thank You to Koehler Electric and their technician, Bill, for helping us maintain our beautiful American and German flags.

memberships & memorials

APRIL 2 - JUNE 18

WILLKOMMEN AN BORD

Ramstad, Kendal Flathman, Larry & Monica Keehner, Rich & Kim Johnson, Susan Bartholomew, Sara Schwickerath, Ann Timm, Duane & Gomez, Jeff Briesch, Katie

Marion IA Davenport IA East Moline IL Rock Island IL Davenport IA Davenport IA Rock Island IL

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Gehrls, Randall & Janet

New Liberty IA

MEMORIALS

GEORGE STRAETKER Houston, Daniel & Joan Zumbaugh, Steven & Kathy Dunbar, Teresa

CLARA MORTIBOY

Pitz, Nicholas & Barbara

DAVE TREIMER Winter, Steven & Debra

RUTH REYNOLDS Beiwel, Ferenc

<u>SANDY MOORE</u> Behrensmeyer, Teresa





DID YOU RENEW?

Many memberships come due at the beginning of each new year. Make sure you are up to date to keep your copy of the Infoblatt coming your way, as well as the many other benefits of memberships. If you know someone who may be interested in becoming a member, have them call, visit the website, or stop by the museum and we will get them registered as a new member!

- **\$25** Student or Youth Memberhsip
- \$35 Individual
- \$45 Couple
- \$55 Family or Grandparent

Never renew again- Join our cadre of Life Members who have given a generous gift to the Center. Half your life membership fee is put into our endowment fund, ensuring a future for the Center!

\$1000 Individual Life Membership\$1500 Couple Life Membership

kalender of events



SATURDAY 8TH. HISTORIC SUMMER WALKING TOUR. 10am. Tickets at eventbrite.com. \$5 per person.

SATURDAY 22ND. HISTORIC SUMMER WALKING TOUR. 10am. Tickets at eventbrite.com. \$5 per person.

SUNDAY 23RD. FAMILY FREE DAY. 12-4pm. Celebrate cultural diversity and immigration history with us on a special Family Free Day! Special artist performance by Miriam Alarcón Avila and free admission to the museum all day. Activities, games, food, and more outside in our parking lot.

THURSDAY 27TH. MY IMMIGRATION STORY: JAZMIN NEWTON. 6pm. FREE for members, \$5 for non-members. Register on *eventbrite.com*

TUESDAY 4TH. CLOSED INDEPENDENCE DAY. We will be closed on July 4th.

FRIDAY 14TH AND 21ST. GAHC @ MERCADO ON FIFTH. 5-7pm. Moline, Illinois. Stop by our booth and say Hola or Guttennacht!

For full details of all our events visit gahc.org/events



SATURDAY 5TH. HISTORIC SUMMER WALKING TOUR. 10am. Tickets at eventbrite.com. \$5 per person.

SUNDAY 13TH. FILM SHOWING. 2pm. View Craft in America's "QUILTS" episode on the 4th floor of the GAHC&M. Learn about contemporary quilters from diverse traditions as we celebrate the important role quilts have played in our country's story. Run time 55 min. FREE. RSVP on eventbrite.com

SATURDAY 19TH. HISTORIC SUMMER WALKING TOUR. 10am. Tickets at eventbrite.com. \$5 per person.

SATURDAY 19TH. NIGHTCAPS IMPROV COMEDY. 8pm. Enjoy Alternating Currents programs all over downtown Davenport! Improv comedy group in the GAHC&M parking lot. *Not suitable for young children. FREE

SUNDAY 20TH. HISTORY OF TOY MAKING IN GERMANY. 2pm. In-person lecture with Ellen Tsagaris. Register at *eventbrite.com*. \$5 per person or FREE for members.

FRIDAY 4TH.

GERMAN AMERICAN DAY.

Mark your calendars! Davenport City council proclaimed August 4th German-American heritage day in Davenport, Iowa. Celebrate the GAHC anniversary of 29 years!

FRIDAY 11TH. GAHC @ MERCADO ON FIFTH. 5-7pm. Moline, Illinois. Stop by our booth and say Hola or Guttennacht!

sept

SATURDAY 9TH. HERBSTMARKT

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FALL CRAFT FAIR. 10am-2pm. New this year! Crafts, decor, homemade baked goods, and more! FREE ADMISSION.

SUNDAY 17TH. GERMAN SAVINGS

BANK OF DAVENPORT. 2pm. Hybrid lecture with Gates Thomas on the history of the German Savings Bank, the largest bank in Iowa during most of its existence. Register on *eventbrite.com.* FREE for members, \$5 for non-members.

FRIDAY 22ND. FALL FROLIC GALA. 5-8PM at the German American Heritage Center. Silent Auction, German meal & musical entertainment! \$60 per person, tickets in advance.

SATURDAY 23RD. GAHC BOOK DISCUSSION. 10:30am. Buddenbrooks by Thomas Mann. FREE and open to the public.

SUNDAY 24TH. 1848ers VIRTUAL LECTURE. 2PM. Virtual lecture with Don Heinrich Tolzmann about the 1848 revolutions. 2023 Marks the 175th anniversary of these events. FREE for members, \$5 for non-members. Register on *eventbrite.com*

SUNDAY 3RD. LAST DAY OF BLUE STAR MUSEUMS. Free admission for Blue Star Military families.

FRIDAY 8TH. GAHC @ MERCADO ON FIFTH. 5-7pm. Moline, Illinois. Stop by our booth and say Hola or Guttennacht!

GERMAN AMERICAN HERITAGE

center & museum

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