

## Calendar of Events\*

Sat. Oct. 10	Buchclub: <i>Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder</i> by Bertolt Brecht, 1:30pm
Thurs. Oct. 15	German Heritage in Letters: From Family Research to Digital History - Zoom Webinar, 6:00pm
Wed. Oct. 14	Konversationsabend: The Power of Paintings, 6:00pm
Fri. Oct. 16	Friday Film Fest: <i>Der Vorname</i> , 6:30pm
Sun. Oct. 25	"Wister and More!" presents the Karlsruher Konzert-Duo, 3:00pm
Wed. Nov. 11	Konversationsabend: Famous Quotations, 7:00pm
Thurs. Nov. 12	The Play World in the Archive - Virtual Lecture by Dr. Patricia Simpson, 6:00pm
Sat. Nov. 14	Buchclub, 1:30pm
Sun. Nov. 15	"Wister and More!" presents the Wister Quartet, 3:00pm
Fri. Nov. 20	Friday Film Fest: <i>Trautmann</i> , 6:30pm
Wed. Dec. 9	Konversationsabend: Weihnachtsfeier, 7:00pm
Sat. Dec. 12	Buchclub, 1:30pm
Sun. Dec. 13	"Wister and More!" presents Musica Capricciosa, 3:00pm

Every Tuesday at 8:00pm, tune in to KA Contact for some "distant socializing" with your fellow GSP members. Invitations are distributed weekly on Mondays via email.

\* Events are subject to cancellation and/or modification based on recommendations from health authorities due to concerns of the spread of COVID-19. We thank you in advance for your patience and understanding.

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# Bierfest

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2021



Tickets and Info at **PHILLYBIERFEST.COM**

Hosted by The German Society of Pennsylvania  
611 Spring Garden St. Philadelphia, PA 19123 215.627.2332

# The German Society of Pennsylvania

Neuer Pennsylvanischer  
**Staatsbote**

CELEBRATING

1764 **250** 2014

YEARS OF  
**GERMAN  
HERITAGE**

Fall 2020

## President's Message

I hope this message finds you well. For the first time in our 256 year history, we did not have an in person Annual Meeting, but took advantage of new technology to make sure that we kept our members as safe as possible.

More than 50 German Society members took the time to participate in the important business of the GSP and adapted to a meeting format that no one could have foreseen at the beginning of this year.

The current crisis has had an unprecedented impact on our organization to the extent that all in person activities during the past six months had to be cancelled. We will continue to suffer significant limitations to our usual operation and event planning for the next three months and beyond until a vaccine and a treatment for this disease becomes available.

2019 seems a time long ago although not even 12 months in the past. But despite the disruptions to our anticipated calendar, there are many positive things that can be said about the German Society's year 2019/2020. Before Covid arrived, we completed a successful year of continuing events including our Annual Stiftungsfest and the Christkindlmarkt celebration among many other programs. Early on as it became clear that we were not dealing with a seasonal flu that would disappear by April, we made adjustments to our next big event, the annual BierFest which took place on February 29. By early February and with typical German efficiency and planning, we ensured that we were prepared to take all required precautions to ensure the health of volunteers and guests.

In our continuing discussions, we have begun to establish a larger level of outreach into the entire German American community as well as into the neighborhoods surrounding the GSP. As reported in an earlier newsletter, our Dogadelphia 2019 event attracted hundreds of people to the GSP that

we had never seen before. Another major improvement in outreach was our first full time presence at the Christmas Village Philadelphia last winter, where we attracted a large audience interested in German traditions and culture.

Trusting the scientists and other health experts, we put the necessary mechanisms in place to continue the operation of our organization and maintained some of our programs as the City of Philadelphia decided to shut all non-essential businesses down. Thanks to the flexibility of our staff who continued to work from home, our teachers who moved to online classes and the dedication of our volunteers to move programs to other settings, we find ourselves prepared to take the next steps in creating our new normal for the foreseeable future.

Financially, this pandemic is certainly a serious challenge for us. We lost most of our rentals and income from the events that could not take place, and I will be speaking about that more in my fundraising letter later this year. In other ways, this health crisis encouraged us to explore new ways to communicate, teach and interact with those individuals who share our interest in German Culture and Heritage.

We are already discussing ideas that reach beyond 2020 and 2021. We are developing more activities that attract people of German descent and others who share our common cultural interests. In addition to some of our more traditional and beloved German themed events, we seek to provide a platform for events that highlight the diversity of German culture thereby hopefully attracting more young people while continuing to serve all age groups.

I wish you all well and hope to see you all in person as soon as conditions allow.

- Tony Michels



## A Brief History of the Women's Auxiliary of the German Society of PA (WAUX) 1900-2019

As of May 30, 2019 the Women's Auxiliary of the German Society of Pennsylvania has been legally dissolved. The Auxiliary (WAUX) was officially founded in May 1900 and incorporated as an independent non-profit corporation in 1907. Our founding was at the behest of the Board of the Society and the good wishes of then President Charles Hexamer who said, "The *Frauenhilfsverein*" - as we were originally known - "would indeed be a great blessing to needy Germans". Welfare and social services in those times were the province of individuals, churches, and benevolent groups, like the GSP. Philadelphia, in 1900, was a bustling hub of commerce and manufacturing with a population numbered at 1,293,697 in the census of that year. Industrial growth, from its colonial days through the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, accelerated after the Civil War. Philadelphia's claim as 'the Workshop of the World', beginning around the 1880s, drew those eager to share in the burgeoning growth and prosperity of the city. Factories and plants in the neighborhoods and industrial zones were engaged in dozens of categories of textile manufacture, shipbuilding, streetcar, locomotive, and railcar manufacture and numerous sectors of support businesses. The neighborhoods were filling with newcomers from the countryside and overseas - among them a significant number of Germans. In response, a group of about 100 women, under the leadership of founding president, Mrs. Antonie Ehrlich, formed the *Frauenhilfsverein* in order to offer a personal approach to German immigrants, predominantly women and children, in need of welfare assistance.

Social activities at the Society and annual dues of \$1.00 funded the work. One of the first acts of charity was \$35 given to the German Protestant Home so that an indigent elderly woman could live out her days there. Another case provided funding for a widowed mother to furnish rooms in her house so she could take in boarders to generate an income. There were wid-

owed fathers in need of money to provide for child-care, families in which the father was struck by illness or injury, and some without adequate income to cover weekly needs. Several members were assigned to meet with applicants to understand the need. Records show weekly payments of \$0.50 to \$5.00 per week with most monetary payments in the \$2.00 range. The monthly total outlay was in the \$25.00 to \$50.00 range in those early days. The financial record also shows regular outlays for cloth yard goods and yarn, used by the busy sewing circle who turned out clothing items for those whom they served.

The women of the WAUX took the challenge, when in 1902 funding was needed for major structural work in the GSP building. They initiated the *Weihnachtsbasar* (Christmas bazaar, will be called Bazaar below), at that time a multi-week affair that began in November. It netted \$7,000 which virtually covered the entire cost of the project (equivalent to approximately \$208,000 at today's value). That was the beginning of the annual event, always the major fundraiser. In 1860, the GSP had initiated a *Weihnachtsbescherung* (Christmas gift distribution to the needy), for which WAUX now took responsibility. Attendees were entertained with music and song, treated to holiday food special-



WAUX members gathered around their homemade items at the Weihnachtsbasar, 1919

ties, and to further delight the children St. Nikolaus, whose bag was stuffed with sweets and toys, didn't overlook any one of them. According to need, at the end of the afternoon each family left with handmade winter clothing items, vouchers for shoes and coal, and cash for carfare. The *Weihnachtsbescherung* was discontinued in 1961. A project that had been planned by the GSP since 1890 was to commission a monument in honor of General Peter Muhlenberg, a Lutheran pastor and officer in the American Revolution, friend of George Washington, and GSP President in 1788 and 1802-1807, and not least the son of the founder of Lutheranism in America - Pastor Heinrich Melchior Muhlenberg. WAUX joined in to support the effort by hosting a theater gala and other events to raise funds. Altogether their contribution was over 10 percent of the final \$7,000 bill that included the cost of the statue, parade and dedication ceremony. A huge crowd turned out for the festivity, hosted by the GSP at City Hall Plaza in Philadelphia in October 1910.

It is evident from records of the early years, that the WAUX Board had a clear idea of how they would organize and administer aid to the needy. The formula was to provide emergency aid and continue it for the short or long-term. Visits with recipients were part of the process and served to give counsel and direction with the goal of independence for the recipient, if feasible. The women of the Welfare Committee were not professional counselors but common-sense women with caring hearts. From our own decades long experience as members of WAUX, this philosophy endured throughout our history.

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 was a time of difficulty for German Americans because Germany was the enemy. The political aspects of the situation did affect both the GSP and the WAUX. Memberships dwindled and some programs were curtailed or changed. However, the WAUX mission was clear and the women proceeded as before - raising funds, interviewing prospective welfare recipients, providing what was needed, and following up with personal

visits. When the Armistice was declared in November 1918 with the Allies as victors, it was evident that the German population was in great need of essentials to support life. The WAUX women put extra effort into their sewing, and in alliance with the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) routed items of clothing and other necessities to Germany. Packages through the AFSC continued through most of the 1920s.

By the late 1920s and through the 1930s, charity administration by small volunteer groups, like WAUX, was being displaced by government and larger social service agencies. The needy now had more options. For the WAUX Welfare Committee, this meant we began serving as a link to other agencies - either to refer cases or receive them. In effect, WAUX became an affiliate of broader city-wide charity administration. Dealings with these agencies meant that each case required documentation in the form of transfer letters and forms. The paperwork was an onerous task for the committee. In retrospect, this period was a transition that, over the next several decades, would change the nature of welfare work for WAUX. By the 1960s aid to individuals and families dwindled to a few cases. Still, up to about 2004 we were assisting one individual and since then there have been no applicants.

By 1939, Europe was headed for war with Germany. Shortly after the US declared war against Germany and the axis powers at the end of 1941, the entire nation was mobilized in support of the effort. Both the GSP and WAUX experienced a scaling down of cultural and social activities. Nevertheless, the needy in the community continued to be served. To fund the work, the WAUX continued with their Oyster Supper, the May Anniversary Luncheon, and the Bazaar. The festive *Weihnachtsbescherung* was an especially welcome event during the winters of the war years. War's end in 1945 and Germany's devastation and defeat, together with the return to a peacetime economy here at home, energized WAUX members. They sought ways to assist with the enormous need



for the basics of survival in Germany where millions of refugees, expelled from eastern Europe or fleeing the Soviet Army, added to the crisis. The GSP and WAUX again partnered with the AFSC to assist with emergency aid to the US Zone. When mail service to the British and US Zones was restored by early 1947 and packages of essential food-stuffs and clothing were permitted via the US Postal Service by individuals, welfare activities ramped-up to fill as many cartons as possible, limited by the fact that there were still shortages of some commodities here. Aid was to continue into the early 1950s as the entire German infrastructure was rebuilt.

Upon the retirement of WAUX President, Mrs. Henrietta Keller, in 1951, an annual student prize for excellence in German was instituted at the University of Pennsylvania. This signaled another direction for WAUX support that grew, over time, to include scholarships and prizes to encourage German studies in this local area. To make it official, in 1957, the WAUX Charter was amended and refiled with the Commonwealth of PA. The filing formalized the dual mission of charity and now scholarship aid. German was taught in many area high schools and universities at the time. About this time too, the post-war wave of German immigration, was under way.

Both the GSP and WAUX welcomed the arrivals, and new programs encouraged their participation. By now, WAUX welfare work broadened to include cash donations to organized charities who served the needy, while we also continued with help to a declining number of individual cases. The Bazaar continued as primary fundraiser, and there were midday activities such as coffees (*Kaffeeklatsch*) and card games that gave women homemakers a social afternoon out.

By the early 1980s, the WAUX Board of Directors noted that there were very few members in the under 60 age group. Action was needed to ensure successors. Members themselves were encouraged to bring in their younger female relatives and letters of welcome went out to women members of the GSP. The efforts re-

sulted in achieving the goal of younger members, who formed a core group, that itself continued to attract new members. A generation shift occurred in 1985 when Renate Genieser became president. However, more and more of the new members were working women so Board Meetings were moved to Saturday mornings. Weekday activities were dropped and new ideas for fund-raising were explored. The Bazaar, at that time, was revitalized to add appeal. Some ideas could not be pursued because these younger women were busy with family responsibilities and/or in the work force. So we fell back to the tried and true - the Bazaar. Preparation for it kept the membership busy stitching, knitting, sewing, baking and turning out various craft items. It continued to be an excellent fundraiser because labor and most merchandise were donated.

In 1983, German Clubs in the Delaware Valley joined in celebration of the 1683 arrival of the 13 families, led by Franz Daniel Pastorius, who settled at Germantown - The Tricentennial. There were numerous commemorations in the city that year. One of them, the *Sommerfest* at Penn's Landing, was held annually after that for many years. The GSP booth was a cooperative effort with WAUX. We had a brisk business with souvenirs, apple strudel, coffee and iced tea. At its height the festival offered tall ships from Germany, a large beer tent, numerous booths with German foods and live music. A highlight at the GSP Booth was the Zither duo, Dr. George and Mrs. Isabella Beichl. The lively music always drew a crowd. For many reasons, among them dwindling attendance and increasing insurance costs for the beer tent the festival was discontinued in 1999.

WAUX traditionally funded each year's charity and scholarships out of current income, primarily from the Bazaar. For the first 80 or so years of our history we had no endowment that generated income. Donations, although welcome, were not solicited. However, in the early 1980s we received the residue of a trust fund that had been designated for WAUX. The money, a sizable amount of about \$40,000 was

originally kept in a bank savings account. When the younger group succeeded in office, a Finance Committee was formed to invest the money. The committee transferred all funds to a portfolio of conservative mutual funds. When in 1996, we were beneficiaries of two bequests totaling \$35,000, they were added to the portfolio - as were smaller bequests received over the years. Since dividends were generally reinvested, the principal grew. During the exile years (see below) those dividends allowed us to meet our commitment to charity and scholarships.

A successful activity, begun in 1996, was semi-annual bus excursions. There was an enthusiastic following and the bus was generally full. Since the committee did the step-by-step tour planning, hosted, and rented the bus, profit was maximized. It was a good fund-raiser. Besides that, a monthly movie evening that featured a homemade meal followed by a German film was introduced. It was another hit. Money earned from both of these efforts was directed to restoring portrait busts and art in the building and refinishing some of the furniture.



*Christmas Bazaar, 2000*

Two major projects of the GSP, for which fundraising had begun in the early 1990s, were renovation of the Horner Library space and preservation of the library collection. The projects were by far the largest undertaking for the GSP in many, many decades. Fundraising

was itself a multi-year effort. President Bernie Freitag pressured WAUX and another group that met weekly at the GSP - the Schlaraffia Filadelfia - to donate. Members of WAUX, many of whom were GSP members, had made private donations to the projects, but it seemed to us that now it was the WAUX portfolio that was sought. Schlaraffia was expelled in 1999. In 2001, President Freitag presented the WAUX Board with a schedule that enumerated rental charges for each of our events. A quick assessment of the charges showed that the rental cost, in most cases, would leave us little profit for our causes. The WAUX Board concluded that volunteers would lose incentive to participate if most of the earnings were targeted for rent. There was a strong sense of entrepreneurship in our group and pride in what we achieved as a result of our work. Further, as a 501(c)3 we would be in violation of the mission because there would be little left for charity or scholarships. The rent schedule, we felt, was meant as an ultimatum since negotiation was not an option. When we expressed what we considered legitimate reasons for our inability to comply, we were told that we would have to leave after the 2001 Bazaar. Now we too were expelled.

It was a catastrophe that the WAUX Board was determined to survive. Our goal was to be reinstated. In the meantime, we were exiled and had to carry on. For the next three plus years, we met in each other's homes and also at the Philadelphia Mennonite High School, in the city. Except for the semi-annual bus trips, there were no fundraisers. In addition to business meetings, we met socially and *Die Zeitschrift*, a quarterly newsletter, was initiated. Welfare and scholarship aid, funded now from portfolio income, continued. In 2003, when James Mundy was elected GSP president, reinstatement talks began. In December of 2005, WAUX once more held the Bazaar at the GSP. When Hardy von Auenmüller became president in 2006, it was through his leadership that WAUX was fully reinstated and we were welcomed back. Doris MacPherson, as president, led the WAUX with



patience and determination through those difficult years.

Now returned 'home', there was a new vitality among WAUX members and membership increased. The Bazaar was renamed to *Christkindlmarkt* and improvements were implemented. WAUX funded the Arts Committee of the GSP that continued to restore artifacts in the collection, most of which is on display in the building. We targeted \$20,000 to the back-entrance door and door surround, and escrowed funds totaling about \$76,000 for yet to be scheduled Ratskeller improvements and a new first-floor kitchen. Also, WAUX President Christel Tillmann, directed the significant effort to gather, order, and archive WAUX historical records. This article would lack historic perspective without reference to this systematized collection.

Like many groups founded in the 20<sup>th</sup> century or before, WAUX failed to attract a significant number of new members in the younger age group. For this reason many women's clubs and organizations have been shuttered. We did see this coming and followed the lead of our predecessors 35 years before. We solicited participation among family and friends and wrote to the women members of the GSP. In 2015, all those interested were invited to a brain-storming session in the GSP Library. The outcome of that meeting allowed us to continue for another two years with several younger women serving as officers. But by the 2018 election, we were unable to find candidates for the offices of President, Treasurer, and Secretary. This situation

gave us no option. In April of 2018, a motion was made to dissolve the WAUX. When duly seconded, the ensuing vote ineluctably passed. Over the next months as the Dissolution process moved ahead, the sad reality of the situation enveloped each one of us.

Dissolution requires that all assets be distributed as directed by the organization's charter. To that end the Horner Library Collection, the "crown jewel of the GSP", received our portfolio of \$268,844. A report compiled by WAUX Treasurer, Doris Simon, shows the WAUX record of giving over the past 30 years was \$332,378 to the GSP for operations and projects, \$147,400 in scholarships and awards to students, and \$131,838 to charities and welfare.

- Renate Genieser and Doris MacPherson -  
members of WAUX since the 1980s

*Writers' Note: We dedicate the above account to the many women who through the years, with loving hearts and hands, contributed to and lived a part of the story. We experienced firsthand what a group of determined women, each one with unique gifts, can achieve together. In these later years, as it likely was from our beginning, we met, socialized and worked at the Society with the support and friendship of the Board of Directors and other members of the GSP. We share a common love of both our heritage and the unique haven that the Society provides. Our desire is that its role in the city and the country endure.*

*Below: WAUX members before the Christkindlmarkt, 2002*



## Library Committee Leadership Changes

The Library Committee at the German Society of Pennsylvania is entering a new era with the retirement of Dr. Maria Sturm as Library Committee Chair after nine remarkable and accomplished years of service. As your incoming Library Committee Chair, I am both honored to be taking over the reins from Maria and grateful for her important work over these past years. The members of the Library Committee have contributed funds to restore a rare book in Maria's honor—or, more accurately, a rare manuscript in the Library's collection: a play titled *Die Pioniere*, about the early German immigrant Francis Daniel Pastorius. This is an appropriate item to adopt in Maria's honor because she is truly a pioneer in advancing the cause of cultural heritage preservation and library services.



I would like to take this moment to introduce myself to those German Society members who do not yet know me. My name is Alex Ames, and I have been involved with the German Society and the Horner Memorial Library for seven years, as a researcher and Library Committee member. I work as Collections Engagement Manager at The Rosenbach, an historic house museum and special collections library here in Philadelphia, where I specialize in exhibitions, outreach programs, and collections management. I organized the Library Committee's Adopt a Rare Book program and am thrilled to have the opportunity to deepen my involvement with the Horner Memorial Library. As library outreach is a particular interest area of mine, I look forward to building on the work of Maria and the Library Committee in outreach and engagement programming during the coming months. The Library Committee looks forward to sharing more details with you in the near future about programs, events, and op-

portunities to make use of our remarkable collections. In the meanwhile, if you have questions, comments, and ideas, please do not hesitate to contact me at [alames@rosenbach.org](mailto:alames@rosenbach.org).

- Alex Ames

## The Passing of Dr. Frauke Schnell



Dr. Frauke Schnell, member of the German Society of PA, friend and colleague at West Chester University, passed suddenly on August 15 at the young age of 57. She is leaving behind her beloved husband Fabio Fernandez, two beautiful daughters Emilia and Luisa, and her parents and brother in Coburg/Germany, her hometown.

Frauke came to the USA as an exchange student in the 1980s and started her professional life at WCU in the Political Science Department in 1992. She was a dedicated mother, friend and scholar, and most recently chaired the Department of Political Science. Her dedication to her students and profession include being instrumental in reforming WCU's Honor's College, establishing international exchange programs, collaborating with Gustav Stresemann Institute/Germany, presenting and publishing on political communication and social justice. Her research is highly respected around the globe.

As a member of the German Society, Frauke enjoyed the Filmabend, Christkindlmarkt, and "Wister and More" concerts. She loved life, laughter, family, friends and was a very creative person, an artist in her own right. At the entrance of the German Society a brick will be dedicated in her honor: "Zur Erinnerung an Dr. Frauke Schnell – Scholar and Friend".

- Karin Volkwein-Caplan



# Moving to Germany during the Covid-19 Pandemic

## Tales of the 2020 Summer & Beginning School Year in Deutschland

When our family left Delaware County on July 24, 2020, it felt like we were fleeing into the unknown. What would life look like in Germany? Could we truly count on schools and activities for the children, something that had been missing from our lives since March 2020? Soon enough we landed in Frankfurt, then another short flight to Hamburg, a van ride to Kiel, and finally we were home. Our doctor came to our home and swabbed all four of us for Covid-19, and within 24 hours we had our negative results. We could start our new lives.

We quickly realized that everyone around us was taking the pandemic seriously, even though the cases per hundred thousand residents was much less than back home in Pennsylvania – Kiel had almost exactly 90% fewer cases per 100,000 than Delaware County. Our shuttle driver to Kiel had made a partition out of a plastic drop sheet, like what you would use for painting, and duct tape. He cheerfully told us that his wife was high risk for Covid-19, and so he had been recently tested. He continued to say that the masks are only for in enclosed areas (shops, restaurants, buses) or when you cannot keep 2 meters apart, and everyone does it. There were signs in every shop to wear a mask, hand sanitizer dispensers as soon as you go into a shop, and either a security person or a store employee standing there ensuring the number of people allowed is not exceeded and that masks are worn. Some places have little tokens for you to take as you enter the store, and if no tokens are left, then you must queue to enter until a token becomes available. Fortunately, he concluded, there will be a sign as you enter each shop to tell you what their system is. He assured me it would be easy enough to understand. He was right.

Certainly, there are those who forget to wear a mask, or do not wear it properly. However, I have seen it happen multiple times that citizens enforce masks and distancing amongst themselves without it causing an argument, but

rather an apology is given from those at fault, and then proper masking and distancing happens. One example of how seriously people are washing their hands: My daughter and I used an employee restroom in a bike shop that had THREE soaps for the workers – for before, during, and after work hand disinfection. There are radio updates as a part of the news about the day's virus numbers, locations, and rough tracing information, all done in an even tone and without political slant. There are also signs in most shop windows, public areas, government buildings, and even at store checkouts about how we wear masks for each other, not for just ourselves. It is a community effort here.

How does this translate to our lives? Some things that are always burdensome, like the paperwork that comes with moving, can feel nearly impossible. Opening a joint account at the bank could not happen without being *angemeldet* (registered at the courthouse as a resident of the city), and we could not become *angemeldet* for two weeks after arrival because the city hall had extremely limited hours due to Corona, and this type of paperwork had to be done in person. I still cannot get an appointment at the *Auslandsamt* (the office for international persons) to apply for a visa for similar reasons. Other things are mildly inconvenient, such as queuing in all-weather outside the bakery or the butcher with 2 meters distance between the customers.

The positives, however, vastly outweigh the negatives. Unlike our American school district, here the kids are starting in school for full days. They wear masks to walk in the building, but not for recess or in the classroom. When they returned to school, recess was only with their classmates. Now, three weeks later, recess is at the same time across the entire grade, although each class must stay on separate areas of the large playground. If a kid were to get cold symptoms (including just a runny nose) they must stay out of school until 48

hours after they symptoms end.

As for after-school activities, they are also taking place. The gymnasiums each have a certain number of children allowed inside based on the square meter area of the gym, and the changing rooms have also been assessed similarly. For example, at our daughter's gymnastics group, only 6 masked children can be in the changing room, but then a maximum of 10 children can participate in the gymnasium itself (unmasked). It feels like there has been an application of careful thought and science behind each Corona-related decision, and furthermore, the thoughts and science behind the decisions have been openly shared. To continue the gymnasium example, we received an email with an Excel-style table showing the area in square meters of each local gymnasium the sports club would usually have access to, the number of participants the area would allow, and the number of club members for each sport, thus including or excluding each gym. This allowed us to see why scheduling problems were happening initially. It still feels like such a relief to see a calm, rational approach being applied to our lives.

Has it been easy all the time? No, certainly not. We definitely, all four of us, mutter "Stupid Corona" with regularity! The kids must remember their backpack, homework, raincoat, bicycle helmet, school snack, water bottle, AND a mask every day. That extra item, the mask, is difficult to remember! The emotional, mental burden of being careful, of being IN a pandemic, persists.



And yet the anxiety, the feeling of being ADRIFT in a pandemic, is greatly reduced. I see the children slowly coming back to themselves. I know I am, too.

– Maureen Kersting

\*This article is an example of the activities of a German Society affiliate. PhillyKinder is a separate PA 501(c)(3) corporation and not a component of the German Society of Pennsylvania.

## Adopt A Rare Book Update



Our latest **Adopt-A-Book** catalog is now available to view at: [www.germansociety.org/adopt-a-rare-book](http://www.germansociety.org/adopt-a-rare-book). This newest Adopt a Rare Book catalog, assembled by the Library Committee at the German Society of Pennsylvania, features books from the oldest part of our library collection. The library was established in 1817 as a Volksbibliothek, to provide GSP members with reading material both entertaining and educational. You'll find an interesting variety of book selections in this latest catalog that illustrate the breadth of subject matter our library contains. Your dollars will pay for Philadelphia-based Book Restorer Ruth Scott-Blackson to repair a book and return it to the library for readers to enjoy. With your adoption, you will receive a certificate of recognition, which can be made out in honor of a loved one. Please email [librarian@germansociety.org](mailto:librarian@germansociety.org) with questions or to adopt a book today!

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## Friday Film Fest 2020/2021 Season

As with many other GSP events, there will be certain changes made to the Friday Film Fest to ensure a safe experience for our guests. This year, our film series will take place in the Auditorium to allow for proper social distancing, and chairs will be spaced accordingly. Attendance is limited to a maximum of 25 guests, who will be required to wear masks inside the building and undergo a temperature check before proceeding inside. We encourage guests to use the sanitation stations located throughout the building after touching shared surfaces. We look forward to seeing you there!

### Der Vorname (2018)

October 16, 2020

German with English subtitles



Thomas and his partner Anna have decided on a very time honored and traditional name for their impending baby. Unfortunately, at a dinner party given by his sister in honor of the occasion, Thomas' impish sense of humor inspires him to suggest that the baby will be receiving another name with considerable resonance in German history. He insists that the others guess that name. He gives them a hint. It begins with A... So begins an intense, thought-provoking and often utterly hilarious *Streitgespräch* that brings the psychology and politics lurking deep within the practice of naming a baby to the surface.

### Trautmann (2018)

November 20, 2020

German with English subtitles



This movie is a British-German biopic about Bert Trautmann, who was captured by British troops in 1944 and imprisoned under harsh conditions in a POW-camp in Lancashire, England. He became a soccer goalkeeper for a local team and eventually a celebrated goalkeeper for Man-

chester City in 1949. His heroics during the FA Cup Final in 1956, when he finished the last 20 minutes of the match after breaking a vertebra in his neck, earned him the admiration of the English public. His love affair and subsequent marriage to an English woman parallel the soccer story, a relationship that was also replete with trials and tragedy.

### Der Fall Collini (2018)

January 15, 2021

German with English Subtitles



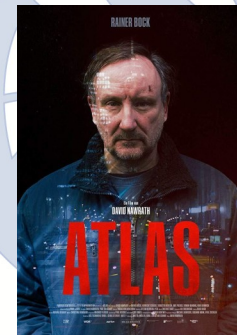
This movie, based on the 2011 book of the same name by Ferdinand von Schirach, is about the vigilante killing of a wealthy German industrialist named Jean Baptiste Meyer by Fabrizio Collini. Collini, an immigrant from Italy, had as a child witnessed the brutal murder of his father in 1943 in Northern Italy by German SS troops who were commandeered by Meyer. The case put a spotlight on the so-called Dreher-law scandal of 1968/69 that reduced the statute of limitations for accessory to murder to 15 years, thus preventing many Nazi era criminal cases from coming to trial, including the one that Collini had filed against Meyer. When Caspar Leinen, the court appointed defense lawyer for Collini played by Elyas M'Barek, takes on this seemingly hopeless case, he soon discovers the complicated and disturbing history of the "*Verjährungsdebatte and – skandal*", a history which forms the leitmotif of the Collini case.

### Atlas (2018)

February 19, 2021

German with English subtitles

Walter Scholl is a 60-year old packer/carrier in a moving company in Frankfurt. Fittingly, he has a tattoo of the ancient mythological titan Atlas on his forearm because he is the strongest in his group despite his advanced age. When his company, which specializes in court ordered evictions or *Entmietungen*, tries to remove a renter from his apartment, Walter's life



changes dramatically when he recognizes his son Jan at the door of the apartment. To evade the police, Walter had left his family when his son was a merely a child and had not seen him for decades. When the eviction struggle escalates, Walter tries to protect his son and his family, including his grandson. This brings him into conflict with not only his professional obligations, but also with one of his colleagues called Moussa who is connected to a criminal Arab clan. To overcome their brutal methods, Walter has to rely on his strength and his willingness to sacrifice his own life for the wellbeing of his son's family. The gripping denouement is a testimony to Walter's personal development while concomitantly exposing the criminal aspects of the German moving business.

### Die Getriebenen (2020)

March 19, 2021

German with No Subtitles



Based on the book *Die Getriebenen. Merkel und die Flüchtlingspolitik* by journalist Robin Alexander, this docudrama reconstructs the dramatic 63 days from July 12, 2015 until November 20, 2015, during which German chancellor Angela Merkel made the decision to accept the Syrian refugees languishing in Hungary. Her famous quote "*Wir schaffen das*" inaugurated the influx of 1 million migrants into Germany by the end of 2015. The migrants experienced both the *Willkommenskultur* of the majority of the German people as well as a measure of *Fremdenfeindlichkeit* that persists to this day. With real TV footage deftly coupled with reenactments, the movie has a realistic and rapid tempo that makes you wonder who the driven are, the refugees or the politicians or both. Actors who look remarkably like the real characters lend this movie a compelling authenticity.

### Das perfekte Geheimnis (2019)

April 16, 2021

German with English subtitles



This comedy by director and screenwriter Bora Dagtekin is a remake of the 2016 Italian movie *Perfetti Sconosciuti* by Paolo Genovese. When seven friends meet for a dinner party, they challenge their trust in each other by agreeing to share all texts and calls on their cell phones with everybody else during the dinner. So they place all their *Handys* in the middle of the dinner table and read all incoming messages aloud and listen in to all the calls by speaker phone. What initially seems so funny and innocent soon yields revelations that leave friendships and even marriages in the balance.

### Steig. Nicht. Aus! (2018)

May 21, 2021

German with German subtitles



This thriller-action movie stars Wotan Wilke Möhring, who plays Karl Brendt, a successful fixer for a large building company in Berlin. He receives an anonymous phone call while he is driving his two kids to school. The caller informs him that there are bombs mounted under the car seats which can be remotely activated or will explode if he tries to get out of the car. A high ransom is demanded. In the meantime, his wife thinks he wants to kidnap the kids. She gets the police involved who respond with a large number of officers. Among the officers is a bomb and terror expert played by Hanna Herzsprung, who tries to figure out what is really going on. Brendt is caught between fleeing the police and trying to save his children from the black-mailer, whose identity is revealed in the riveting ending.

- Karl Moehlmann