

Concordia Trust

Cultivating and promoting the German language and cultural experience

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Preserving our German-American History

by Marlene H. K. Stocks

“Where to start”? This may be the very question you ask yourself as you prepare to organize or downsize your home or that of a loved one. Everywhere you look – in the closets, drawers, attic, basement and garage – there is “stuff”. The decision to keep or discard many of these items may be easy. Getting rid of an old exercise bike, luggage or microwave, for example, could potentially be made in seconds. But when cleaning out a home, you may have a limited number of hours or patience to complete this task. As a result there is often a temptation to quickly toss, without examining items closely, and thus discard important artifacts of your family’s history that provide a valuable insight into its past. Since this information may not exist elsewhere, it may be meaningful to other family members or of interest to the public to have selected items preserved so the story of your family and its German-American legacy can continue to be told.

By keeping important personal data about relatives, you are preserving a family’s history to the delight of those in your own family who enjoy the hunt for genealogical information. You are also retaining examples of the trends, products and opinions that shaped the lives of people generations ago, which could be of interest to historians, authors and museum curators. And, as we are a nation of immigrants, the preservation of keepsakes or German-American material culture from the “old” country can increase our cultural and societal awareness of the millions who left foreign shores to settle in the United States and contribute meaningfully to the fabric of American life.

Dr. Don Heinrich Tolzmann, Concordia Trust director and Curator of the German Heritage Museum in Cincinnati explains that “Wikipedia defines material culture as ‘the physical evidence of a culture in the objects and architecture they make, or have made.’ Thus, any and all items can be included in this definition. German-American material culture, therefore, includes items brought to, or created in America by German immigrants and their descendants. How can such items be identified? Items with a German imprint, such as ‘Made in Germany’ are clearly recognizable, as are German-language materials, but other items are not so clearly identifiable.”



Now the questions are “what should I look for” and “what should I do with it”? On the personal front, scan old Bibles and other religious texts for important family information. Search and retain expired passports, naturalization papers, family trees, birth/marriage/death certificates, military documents and most especially photos of people who may be relatives.

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Supporting Students of German

Certificate of Achievement Awards

On April 26, the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) honored 152 students from 34 public, private and parochial schools throughout the greater Delaware Valley for their outstanding performance on this year's AATG exam.

The Concordia Trust presented \$100 cash awards to the following deserving high school students of German:

Joseph Hessler—Central Bucks High School—South
Andres Forero—Immanuel German School
Stephen Holt—Unionville High School

Herzlichen Glückwunsch!



American Association of Teachers of German
 Serving German teachers since 1926

AATG Award Recipients Express Their Thanks

“Thank you for the Outstanding German Proficiency Award. Since my father has German parents, the German language and culture have always been key parts of my life. Thus, I have studied the German language and culture since I first had the opportunity to do so, even visiting Germany in the summer of my third-grade year. I took the AATG German Exam to see how I have progressed in my studies of the German language so far. I am very lucky to have such an amazing German language program at my school, and I hope that the district will continue teaching German for many years to come.”

Many thanks, Joseph Hessler

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“I am contacting you to thank you for the 100 dollars I received in the Concordia Trust award which I received at the Cannstatter Volksfest on April 26th 2014. These awards help me to strive to do better in my German studies and I thank you [for] your generosity to help me achieve German expertise.”

Thank you, Andrés Forero

“I want to thank you for the \$100 you gave me as recognition for the 2014 National German Exam. Despite having a small popularity compared to Spanish or French in most high schools, German has been profound in my personal and academic life since I started five years ago in 7th grade. Your efforts help to ensure that others will discover not only the joys of the German language and culture, but also of other foreign languages and cultures that students need to understand in the increasingly global economic market. When I first started to learn German, I decided to spend a month in Germany with my school in our first student exchange two years ago. Even though I already loved studying other cultures, this provided me with my first real, natural experience in a foreign country and culture. Now, approaching my Senior year, I am even strongly considering studying in a German, or at least European, university for my post-secondary education.

Sincerely, Stephen Holt



Wir sprechen Deutsch

First *Ernst Karl Knott Memorial Award* is Presented to Council Rock High School South Student

Marlene Stocks, Concordia Trust President, presented the first *Ernst Karl Knott Memorial Award* in memory of her father to graduating senior, Donald Holton, at the school's Senior Recognition Night on June 17, 2014.

The recipient of the \$500 award wrote, "it's an absolute honor to be a recipient of the Concordia Trust Ernst Karl Knott Memorial Award. For the last five years, I've loved learning all about the German language and culture. Some of my favorite memories from my time at Council Rock High School South are the trips I made with the German Club to

the Cannstatter for Oktoberfest, and German was always one of my favorite subjects. I hope that at some point in the future I am able to travel to Germany and put my experience to use.

Next year I plan on attending Villanova University, and the gift will help me cover some of the associated expenses. I can't thank you enough for such a generous award, and I promise I will work hard at college to deserve such a gift.

Sincerely,
Donald Holton



Immanuel German School Student Receives Marlene H. K. Stocks Award

"I would like to thank you for awarding me the Concordia Trust Award. I am very grateful for Concordia Trust and its efforts to support students who have excelled in German. It is an amazing honor to be recognized for my achievements in the German language. I've been striving to improve my German for years and am still continuing to learn more and more each year at the Immanuel German

School. I hope to be able to use this award for a trip to Germany. If not, I will make sure to use it when I buy books for college, specifically Heidelberg University, if all goes well. Thank you very much for the generous (\$500) gift and support that you have given me and other recipients."

Sincerely, Elisabeth Juechser



Lower Moreland Student Presented Concordia Trust Excellence in German Award

Continuing the tradition of many years, Concordia Trust presented an award for outstanding German language proficiency to a graduating Lower Moreland High School senior. This year, The Concordia Trust Certificate of Achievement Award for \$250 was given to Chloe Wiggins.

Julien Drennan, Principal of Lower Moreland High School, expressed thanks to Concordia Trust for the continuous support.

"Thank you for this German award. It will come in handy when I attend Stanford University this fall. I hope to do a study abroad program there as they do a tie-in between this and engineering courses (which are part of my major)."

*Thank you again,
Chloe Wiggins*



Supporting German Language and Cultural Organizations



Support of Immanuel German School

“On behalf of the students and faculty of the Immanuel German School, we are pleased to accept the Concordia Trust check in the amount of \$1,000.

Thanks again for your support and for all your contributions to the school.”

Delbert Hausman, Principal

Support for Central Bucks West Student Trip to New York to Attend *Tonbandgerät* Concert

On March 26, 2014, Central Bucks High School West German teacher, Inge Karlberg-Stannik, took a group of 30 students to New York for a Goethe Institute sponsored concert of the German band *Tonbandgerät*.

“It was wonderful all around”, Frau Karlberg-Stannik reported. “The kids were excited, the setting was intimate, the Goethe Institute personnel were terrific and everything went off without a problem.”

As a thank you for the financial support from Concordia Trust, the students wrote:

Danke sehr! Das Konzert hat viel Spaß gemacht!

Ich fand das Konzert sehr toll und ich höre noch Tonbandgerät!

Danke schön! Es war wunderbar!

Danke. Die Musik war sehr gut!

Es war sehr toll und spitze!

Danke dich für uns helfen!

Danke sehr! Das Konzert war super!



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 Marlene Stocks**

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*“Enclosed is a gift to
 Concordia Trust to honor your
 Dad’s (Ernst Knott) memory. I
 am sure he wishes to support
 the furthering of the German
 studies the Trust supports.”*

Erwin and Libby Koch

*“Please accept the enclosed
 check in memory of Ernst Knott.
 He was a fighter for the
 ‘Deutschtum’ and would be
 happy to know that with the
 donations in his memory he
 gives the Concordia Trust a big
 boost to provide more support
 to the German American
 heritage.”*

Willy and Margot Purucker



* donations received between
 August 27, 2013 & August 20, 2014

Experience the German Language and Culture

Concordia Trust

3408 Hillside Drive
Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Phone: 215.947.5490

Fax: 215.947.5787

E-mail: concordiatrust@verizon.net

Website: www.concordiatrust.org

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The Concordia Trust

invests in the future of German language education, scholarship and cultural programming by ...

- Supporting the Immanuel German School
- Presenting language awards to deserving students of German
- Promoting German cultural events

Preserving German-American History (continued from page 1)

Read old letters, cards, journals, and diaries for factual information about relatives and retain when appropriate. Either keep them for a future generation or share them with a relative that maintains the family genealogy.

To help preserve the cultural experience of ethnic groups, collect the steamer trunks, folk art, toys, tools, cookbooks, linens and vintage clothing/costumes that were brought with German-speaking immigrants to this country in search for a better life. The talents, values and beliefs of these people are reflected in the items they brought with them and can also be donated to local cultural museums and historical societies.

According to Dr. Tolzmann, "An inestimable, but significant portion of German-American material culture has no doubt been lost for a variety of reasons. Much of course has been discarded or destroyed by neglect or lack of awareness of an item's value, or simply not knowing what to do with an item. Socio-political factors also come into play, as for example, during World War I when items of German/German-American origin suddenly became politically incorrect. This, by the way, adds to the rarity of some items, such as books, periodicals, and newspapers, which were often tossed out, burned, or destroyed during the war."

Take your time and carefully examine the rich familial and German-American contents of the treasures you uncover in dusty attics and crumbling boxes. In the end, it may be a memorable and enriching experience for you, and not the task you have been dreading.

Dr. Tolzmann suggests "when in doubt, it is best to ask, or seek advice". In greater Philadelphia, two resources are Susan Hartmann (seppnsusi@aol.com or 215.514.8536) and Rosalie Matico (rematico@comcast.net or 215.552.9399.)

The Concordia Trust, created in 2001, is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) charitable foundation. Its mission is to promote and support German language education, scholarship and cultural programming.

