Sacramento’s role in the Turn Verein movement

After Napoleon’s brutal defeat of the Prussian army in 1806, the Turner movement, in response to that humiliation, began in Germany. Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, the founder of the Turners, argued that a revived, independent Germany could be achieved only through democratic reforms, national unification, and a program for young Germans of vigorous physical exercise, patriotic ideals and love of liberty.

In 1811, he set up an athletic field, or Turnplatz, in Berlin, and thus the movement began, soon becoming closely associated with the Burschenschaften, the student fraternities that agitated for democratic reforms.

After 1842, when prior government restrictions against the Turners were lifted, the movement spread.

Following the failure of the 1848 uprising in Germany, the Turner movement gained wide popularity among German immigrants in the United States, where, by 1855, there were 74 Turner Societies formed. Exiled revolutionaries from Germany, known as “Forty-Eighters,” played key roles in the establishment of many of these societies. The majority of the members came from the class of skilled crafts workers, part of the one million or so Germans who emigrated to the United States during the years 1847-1857.

The immigrant Turners’ commitment to liberty and equality brought them into conflict with the powerful pro-slavery and anti-immigrant forces in American society. They played a proud role, in large numbers, in the American Civil War. Throughout the country, Turners were among the first to volunteer for military service. More than two thirds of Turners in America served in the Union Army.

In May 1854, an announcement went out in Sacramento inviting “some civic minded German born citizens” to found a Turn Verein. Four days later, on 2 June, 29 men held their first organization meeting at a location in the 500 block of J Street, and elected their officers.

After substantial membership growth, in 1859 Sacramento Turners bought their first property on K Street between 9th and 10th streets. Membership dues were $2.00 per month.

The bust of Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, founder of the Turn Verein movement, on permanent display in the Sacramento Turn Verein Library.

The Sacramento Turn Verein became famous for its extravagant celebrations, with large and colorful parades, grand balls, concerts, bonfires, gun salutes — and, of course, gymnastic competitions. Turner Fests were rotated constantly, among Sacramento, San Francisco, Marysville, Oakland, Stockton, and San Jose.

The cornerstone of the present Turn Verein building on J Street was dedicated in May 1926, just three years before its Diamond Jubilee in 1929. In 1945, the mortgage on the building was paid off.

The city of Sacramento came to declare “Turner Hall” as the ideal meeting place for large events in the city. And it also came to recognize the Turners as an active, lively group that stood for high ideals, physical fitness, and love of freedom and equality.
Newly elected officers of the Sacramento Turn Verein
Front: Gery Frankenstein, Ingeborg Carpenter, and Heinz Ludke, Trustees
Back: Freddie Diringer, Sergeant at Arms; Karla Diringer, Secretary; Walter Zacharias, President; Ed Broneske, Treasurer; Emily Via, Vice President. Missing: Jeff Stehr, Master of Equipment.

This leadership team above, was elected to carry on – 164 years after the 29 signers listed below founded the Sacramento Turn Verein, in 1854,
By June 26, 1963, not even two years had passed since the Soviets began construction of the Berlin Wall.

On that day, President John F. Kennedy spoke to West Berliners who, as victims of the Cold War, found themselves surrounded inside East Germany, fearing East German occupation.

There, outside the Schöneberg Rathaus, they heard the U.S. president make a speech of solidarity with them as citizens of West Germany.

Before making the speech, at the last moment, while walking up the steps of the Rathaus, Kennedy asked his interpreter to translate the sentence, “I am a Berliner.”

He then practiced the phrase in the office of Willy Brandt, mayor of Berlin at the time.

Kennedy made his own cue card, using phonetic spellings, (as shown above, in Kennedy’s own handwriting. (The note is now in possession of the National Archives in Washington.)

Kennedy said to the crowd of West Berliners, “Two thousand years ago the proudest boast was “Civis Romanus sum.” [“I am a Roman citizen” – see the middle line above]. Today in the world of freedom, the proudest boast is, Ich bin ein Berliner. All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin, and therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words “Ich bin ein Berliner!”

His speech was interrupted throughout by rapturous cheers of approval.

Note the last line of Kennedy’s cue card above, again using phonetic spelling, “Lust z nach Berlin komen” This was his prompt for a daring line in his speech, also delivered in German: “Lasst sie nach Berlin kommen.” [Let them come to Berlin.!”]

Small groups of people on the other side of the Wall were watching, but were not even able to wave because of the large groups of East German Police on guard.

This now-famous speech understandably had a strong impact on the morale of the Berliners, who had been so recently alarmed by the building of the Berlin Wall.

Kennedy with Berlin Mayor Willie Brandt
A Side-by-Side Story

Der Löwe und die Maus


Der Löwe denkt: „Ein Löwe darf keine kleinen Tiere töten, er darf keine Maus töten.” Dann sagt er: „Lauf, kleine Maus, spiele weiter.”

Einige Tage später geht der Löwe durch den Wald und läuft in ein Netz. Das Netz ist sehr stark, und der Löwe kann nicht entkommen. Er will das Netz zerbeißen, aber er kann es nicht. Er brüllt laut, und alle Tiere im Walde hören ihn brüllen. Auch die Maus hört ihn brüllen.

Schnell läuft sie zurück in den Wald und zerbeißen das Netz mit ihren scharfen Zähnen. Bald ist der Löwe wieder frei, und nun versteht er, wie gut es ist, kleinen Tieren zu helfen.

The Lion and the Mouse

A lion is lying asleep in the woods. A little mouse is playing in the place where he is sleeping. It springs on the lion and wakes him up. The lion catches the mouse. The little mouse says, “Don’t kill me. We mice always play around here. My father and my mother, my grandfather and my grandmother, my cousins and aunts, we all play around here. If you don’t kill me, I will never again play in your woods.”

The lion thinks, “A lion may not kill a little animal. He may not kill a mouse. Then he says, “Run, little mouse, go ahead and play.”

A few days later, the lion is going through the woods and runs into a net. The net is very strong, and the lion cannot escape. He tries to bite the net to pieces but he can’t do it. He roars loudly and all the animals in the woods hear him roar. The mouse also hears him roar.

Quickly he runs back into the woods and bites to pieces the net with his sharp teeth. Soon the lion is free again, and now he understands how good it is to help little animals.

The Story of a Wonderful ‘Magnet’

Imagine: You are a German, born in the early 1800s. You are a farmer, working a small plot of rented land that can barely support you and your family. You own the clothes on your back, and not much more. Expectation for any future good fortune is no more than a foolish dream.

Your father lived in similar circumstances, as did his father before him.

Then one day you hear uttered those magical words – words that you think only a madman could utter – “free land!” And there it was: Free land in America! The cry went out.

It was in 1862 that Abraham Lincoln signed into law the Homestead Act, giving land ownership of a “homestead,” at no cost, as long as certain provisions were carried out.

Typically, a homestead consisted of 160 acres (65 hectares) of land in Alabama, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Wisconsin, and all states west of the Mississippi River except Texas.

The Homestead Law mandated that the applicant
1) file an application
2) improve the land
3) file for a deed of title

Anyone (including freed slaves) who had never taken up arms against the U.S. government, was eligible to file an application for a federal land grant. The applicant had to be at least 21 years old and a United States citizen, or had to have filed a declaration of intent to become a citizen. The only cost was a small fee for filing the claim.

Imagine the effect on Germans considering emigration in those times!

Government records show 25 million entries for tracts in public domain land.
The Innkeeper’s Commandments

Commandment 1: Thou shalt believe your innkeeper.
Commandment 2: Thou shalt laud and praise your innkeeper far and wide.
Commandment 3: Thou shalt visit your innkeeper on Sundays and holidays.
Commandment 4: Thou shalt honor and value your innkeeper and not annoy him, so that he will have long life.
Commandment 5: Thou shalt not, if you become intoxicated, get noisy or violent, but rather take yourself proudly and quietly home.
Commandment 6: Thou shalt not be impolite in the inn.
Commandment 7: Thou shalt take care of your beer properly and not drink up your neighbor’s beer.
Commandment 8: Thou shalt not covet the innkeepers wife, his cook or his waitress, as they belong to the innkeeper alone.
Commandment 9: Thou shalt not expect food and drink that you can’t pay for.
Commandment 10: Thou shalt keep all the rules so that you will not enter hell suffering from thirst.

We came upon this plaque mounted in a prominent place in an old parish residence in Hohenfelden, Germany, now converted into a restaurant.

Below is the English translation.

The German-American Cultural Center – Library’s main means of communicating with our members is email. Unfortunately, we do not have email addresses for all members. Some members do not have access to email, and so they are limited to the information published in Mitteilungen.

However, in many cases, the information we send by email is more current and time sensitive. For this reason, if you are a GACC-L member with email access and you are not receiving monthly notices that include our minutes of meetings, please send your email address to gacc_library@frontier.com.

We also send announcements of our monthly cultural events to our members and to a separate list of people who have asked for this service.

It is available not only to members of the GACC-Library, but to all readers of Mitteilungen – just send your email to the above address to be added to this list as well.

Membership Renewals

This is a time to remind GACC-Library members that annual membership dues for the GACC-Library are now due, in January 2018.

The dues of $15.00 per family household have not increased since the early months of the Library in 1998.

Members can pay their dues by check or cash at a meeting, or by credit card on the GACC-Library page of the Sacramento Turn Verein website: www.SacramentoTurnVerein.com.

Attention visitors to your local tavern!

Keep Up-To-Date on German American Cultural Center – Library Activities and Events

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Low German is not ‘low’

Many times an American of German descent is heard to say, “Oh, my parents spoke German but not very well, it was Low German.” The implication for the listener is that Low German is somehow of lower quality or more debased than High German. I have even heard a German teacher say, “Low German is a mixture of bad German and worse English.”

However, this is not true. In German, we distinguish broadly between Niederdeutsch, Mitteldeutsch, and Oberdeutsch. Actually, these names – low, middle and high – are strictly geographical in origin and they haven’t the slightest thing to do with social class.

So, if you are uninformed as was the German teacher, best you take to heart the proverb, “Besser stumm als dum” (better to remain silent than show you’re stupid).

Terms that cause confusion are “High German” and “Low German.” High German is the middle ground between Oberdeutsch (upper or mountain German) and Mitteldeutsch (midway German or middle upland German).

High German is the middle ground between Oberdeutsch (upper, or mountain German) and Mitteldeutsch (midway German or middle upland German).

Low German has been spoken only north of an imaginary boundary called the Benrath line. The line runs generally eastward from just north of Cologne through East Prussia.

Remnants of Low German no longer spoken officially are found as Plattdeutsch in rural areas north of the Benrath line. Platt sounds much like English because both have roots in Saxon.

As one moves northward toward the Netherlands, the language sounds more and more Dutch. The Low Franconian dialect farther south moves unbroken over the state boundary, then merges with the Rhenish Franconian dialects.

These gradual changes in dialects that one experiences when moving north and south is basic to understanding the standardization that was to begin at the time of Martin Luther.

The reason for High German rather than Low German becoming the accepted dialect is a matter of coincidence. As a result of the attempt by the duke of Saxony in the early 1500s to standardize the dialects in his duchy, a language for state affairs called Kanzleisprache was adopted.
In other words, Martin Luther was compromising between the extremes of upper and lower German. The real coincidence was that he came from the Saxon area and wrote many manuscripts, including the Bible, in the Kanzleisprache.

This blending of dialects grew into what is called New High German, with a grammar taught in the schools to all Germans. It is sometimes called Bühnensprache (stage language) or Schriftdeutsch (written German).

The irony is that although everyone writes High German, almost no one speaks it all the time. At home and among friends, Germans speak their own local dialects. This tradition reflects the reverence and devotion of the German to his local region, hometown, and territorial district.

This is not matched in our culture. In the United States a person who is heard speaking sub-standard English may well be branded as uneducated or as a hick. On the other hand, a German who is studying at the university and using only High German, upon returning to his hometown reverts to the local dialect. If he does otherwise, he is seen as an intolerable snob.

In the United States, a candidate for political office tries to endear himself to voters by shaking hands and kissing babies. The same effect is achieved by the German candidate by speaking in the regional dialect.

The common parent of English and German is Saxon. Both also share a single grandfather, Gothic.

Long before the Romans moved into German territory, many Germanic tribes roamed Europe, one of which was the Goths. After the Christian era began, the Goths migrated to southern Russia. There, in about 350 AD, Bishop Wulfila translated the Bible into Gothic. It is from this document that linguists have been able to compare the Gothic Language with later Saxon documents – and to determine that Saxon evolved from the root language of Gothic.

Thus the parent language of modern English was Anglo-Saxon – of modern German, Saxon.

Source: Of German Ways, by LaVern Rippley, Barnes and Noble Books, 1970
Welcome to the 14th annual showing of the German classic, “Die Feuerzangenbowle”
Friday, January 19, starting at 7 p.m.
at the Sacramento Turn Verein.

Admission: $15 ($10 for students)

It may be surprising to some of the visitors to this film that “Die Feuerzangenbowle” released 74 years ago, was a wartime film.

Released in 1944, as Germany was suffering massive casualties and bombing raids, the German film industry was being called upon to produce entertaining films to distract the population from the disastrous course of the war. “Die Feuerzangenbowle” met that demand.

Literally, the word Feuerzangenbowle means “Fire Tongs punch.” Feuer (rhyming with the name Boyer) means “fire.” Zangen (with the Z sounding like “ts”) means “tongs.” And Bowle (sounding like “bowl-a”) means “punch.”

The viewer of this state-controlled German film will hardly be aware that its various scenes were shot over and over, with the aim of perfection – as well as the deliberate eating up of time! The reason: As long as the young actors were working on the film, they would not be drafted into the war. Thus, the long, slow, and repetitive shooting of every scene. Yet by the time the movie was released in 1944, some of the actors in this film had been killed on the battlefield.

The film stars a favorite German actor, Heinz Rühmann, who plays the role of a university professor with a doctorate degree. When he and his old friends, all in their 60s and 70s, get together in the heart-warming Feuerzangenbowle drink, they become carried away by telling stories of their school years, remembering all the nasty tricks they played on their teachers in years long gone.

It is then discovered that one of them, Hans Pfeiffer, had a private tutor when he was growing up; therefore, he never attended school, and thus had no opportunities to play dirty tricks on his teachers. And so the film begins. (Rühmann was 42 years old at the time.)

About our “Intermission”: At about its half-way point, the film will be interrupted to enjoy the Feuzangenbowle drink. The lights will be lowered to enhance the beautiful “blue haze” of the rum-soaked and burning Zuckerhut as it drips slowly into the mulled wine mixture below it. When the film ends, you may return for another taste of the Feuerzangenbowle.
**Starkbierfest Time**

Starting in late February, Starkbierfest is traditionally held in Munich for three weeks with beer halls and breweries hosting Starkbierfest across the city. In the United States, there are only a handful of cities keeping the tradition of Starkbierfests alive, serving up strong beer and bockwurst to celebrate Lent.

The origins of this festival of strong beer (Starkbier) can be traced back to the Paulaner monks living in Munich during the 17th century, who originally prepared strong-beer to endure Fastenzeit, the Lenten fast. Although it was forbidden to eat for 40 days during those times, the monks were allowed to drink. They dubbed the beverage “Flüssiges Brot” (liquid bread), as it helped them survive their 40 days of fasting with full bellies and good spirits.

Bavarian rulers began joining in the tapping of the first Starkbier kegs in the early 1700s, and the first public beer festival was held in 1751.

The strong, malty beer was classified as a Doppelbock. Literally, Doppelbock means double bock (Bockbier). It is one of German’s signature beers, typically with an alcohol content by volume of around 7 percent, but some Doppelbocks go up to 13 percent in strength.

There are many theories about the origins of the name Bockbier. One of them is that it evolved from Einbecker Bier (named for the German city of Einbeck, famous for its beers in the Middle Ages) into Bockbier.

Another theory cites the Germanic god Donar (the equivalent to the Norse god Thor) and his goat-led chariot as the source. Donar was the symbol of fertility and ensured a good harvest. The dark beers, brewed from the harvested grains, were named after Donar and his pack of goats. “Bock” is the German word for a male goat (Ziegenbock).

Bockwurst is a special mild German sausage invented in Berlin in 1889 by restaurant owner R. Scholtz, created to pair with Bockbier and mustard.


**My Friend Ethel and the ‘Lusitania’**

Ethel and I were only ten years old when the “Lusitania” was sunk [May 15, 1915] by a German submarine. The newspapers carried stories, and people were awfully shocked about the incident. My father Albert James Roath, with his English background was real mad at the Germans. The next morning I met my friend Ethel Behrmann as usual at the corner on our way to school. I told Ethel what my father had said about those terrible Germans, and that I also thought that they were bad. Ethel came right back at me.

“You’ve got it all wrong. You know what my grandfather said? He said it serves them just right. Why did they run that ship back and forth to England, Germany’s enemy, if it were not for guns and ammunition? And he said that the Germans had warned them several times.”

I didn’t take that from Ethel. “No,” I said, “they’ve done us wrong and they are bad!” “Oh, shut up,” she replied angrily, “my grandfather knows better than your father.” Now I got mad, too: “No, you better shut up! My family has been in this country longer than yours.” She screamed at me: “How do I care, if you don’t think that I am right I won’t talk with you anymore!” That was too much. I screamed right back: “No, I don’t!” And that was the last time we spoke to each other for months.

One day, when I told my mother about our broken friendship, she said: “Child, this war is a terrible thing, and remember that my father, your grandfather, also came from Germany, like Ethel’s grandfather. And let me tell you something else, it just isn’t right that you girls have your own little private war. Why don’t you talk with Ethel that you want to be friends again.”

The next morning, I saw Ethel at the corner and said: “Why don’t we end our little war, ‘cause I still like you.” Ethel was glad that I had broken the ice. Our friendship was as nice as before the “Lusitania” – and it lasted until the end of Ethel’s life in 1985.

Join a German Language Class at the Sacramento Turn Verein

2018 Winter Schedule for Adults

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<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginning German 1A</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>7:45 – 9:15 pm</td>
<td>Jan 8 - Feb 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beginning German 1A</td>
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<td>Intermediate German 2AB</td>
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<td>Jan 8 – Feb 26</td>
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<td>Intermediate German 2CD</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>Conversation 2CN</td>
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<td>Advanced German 4AD</td>
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<td>Advanced Conversation 4CN</td>
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2018 Winter Schedule for Children

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<th>Class</th>
<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>Krabbelgruppe (ages 1-3)</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>9:30 am – 10:00 am</td>
<td>January 13 – March 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children's Class (ages 4-7)</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>10:15 am – 11:00 am</td>
<td>January 13 – March 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children's Class (ages 8-11)</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>11:15 am – 12:15 pm</td>
<td>January 13 – March 3</td>
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The STV opens to students 30 minutes prior to class. Students must leave the STV at the end of each class, no later than the teacher.

Tuition (8 weeks) for the Krabbelgruppe is $65 per child for this session. All other children’s classes are $85 per child for this session. Tuition includes materials used during classes. Fees are due on enrollment and are non-refundable. The minimum number of students per class is six.

Parents may register children in person on the first day of classes and pay the tuition by check or cash. If you wish to register in person, please arrive at the STV 30 minutes prior to the start of classes on the first day of the session to avoid a late start. Those who wish to register earlier can do so using a credit card or PayPal account on our website. Our website address is:

http://stv-germanlanguageschool.org

Registering early, online, makes for smooth and efficient scheduling and enrollment procedures. Thank you!

What’s going on at the Turn Verein?

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Keep up with Turn Verein events! www.SacramentoTurnVerein.com
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<td>STV Library Open 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.</td>
<td>STV Member Meeting 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>STV German School Section 7:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>STV Library Open 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.</td>
<td>STV Soccer Meeting 7:00 p.m. Club Room</td>
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Keep up with Turn Verein events! www.SacramentoTurnVerein.com
Komm mit zum Turn Verein

January 19, 7 p.m.: Feuerzangenbowle. See page 8.

Want to learn more about German traditions and ways of life? You can help keep such memories alive by joining and participating in activities of the German-American Cultural Center – Library. Membership is only $15 per year. To join, send your check for $15, payable to “GACC-L” and mail it to GACC-Library, Sacramento Turn Verein, 3349 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95816.

We meet at 7:30 p.m. on the second Thurs-

German-American Cultural Center – Library

LIBRARY HOURS: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesdays; 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays
Telephone 916-442-7360