

325th German-American Day in Germantown, Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, PA (awj) - What better place to celebrate German-American Day than where it all began in Germantown, Pennsylvania? Here the first group of German settlers (13 families) arrived from Krefeld, Germany on October 6, 1683. They sailed across the Atlantic aboard the "Concord," considered the "Mayflower of the German immigration," and founded Germantown, the first permanent German settlement in America, now part of the city of Philadelphia.

A full calendar of events leading up to the 6th of October was planned by the German-American Day Celebration Committee of Philadelphia, chaired by Marlene Stocks and Marlene Fricker. Together they put together an excellent calendar of events, beginning with the German-American Steuben Parade in Philadelphia and

continuing on with tours, historic demonstrations, films, exhibits, wine and beer tastings, concerts, festivals, and a German Ecumenical Worship Service.

On the 6th of October, a special wreath-laying ceremony took place in Vernon Park, where the Pastorius Monument is located.

This is a national monument that was dedicated in 1920, and honors the

of America, Pastorius Unit No. 38, and an address presented by historian Dr. Don Heinrich Tolzmann on "The First German Settlement in America: Germantown's 325th Anniversary, 1683-2008." The ceremony concluded with Angela Carter, an eighth grade student from the Pastorius School, reading a poem she had written about Pastorius.

Then a luncheon commemorating "325 Years: Celebrating the German Legacy in Philadelphia," sponsored by the German-American Day Celebration Committee and the German-American Chamber of Commerce-Philadelphia at the Union League of Philadelphia. A special tribute was given to Mr. John C. Haas and Mr. Raj Gupta, Chairman, President and CEO of Rohm and Haas Company, in recognition of the German roots of the Haas family and Rohm and Haas Company.

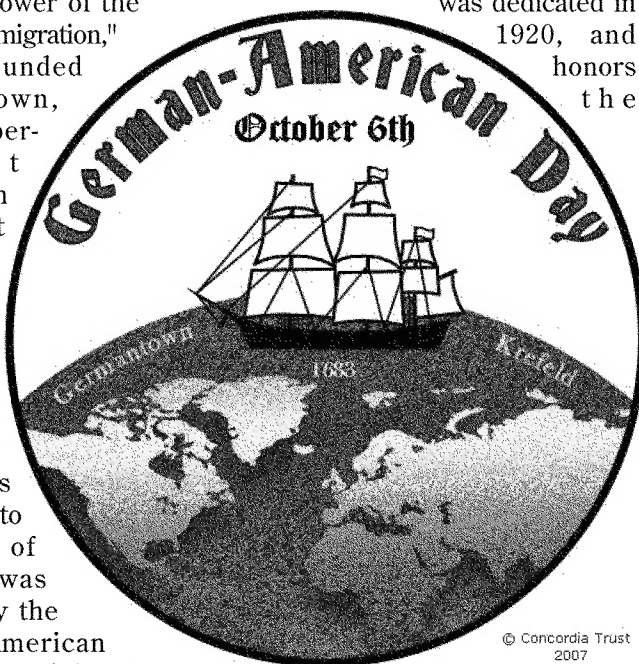
The wreath-laying ceremony and luncheon were well attended by representatives of the German-American cultural, business and academic communities, the German Consulate General of New York, Mr. Bernd Scheelen, Mayor of Krefeld and a member of the German parliament, and many others from the community at large. Also in attendance from Canada was Bonnie Schepers, a

tenth-generation direct descendant of Franz Daniel Pastorius.

Crowning the 325th anniversary of German-American Day was the spectacular light display atop the PECO building in downtown Philadelphia that carried the announcement: "German-American Day, October 6th!" This message beamed out

to the city of Philadelphia, making this a landmark celebration that will go into the annals of German-American history. Altogether, a dignified and fitting tribute to the 325th anniversary of German-American Day, and an exemplary model as well. For further information on the net, see: www.germanamericanday.org.

Dr. Don Heinrich Tolzmann



© Concordia Trust
2007



A wreath-laying ceremony was held at the Pastorius Monument in Vernon Park in Germantown in Philadelphia, with the wreath presented by the Steuben Society of America, Pastorius Unit No. 38

first families, as well as their leader, Franz Daniel Pastorius, who is considered the "father of the German immigration" to America. The wreath was presented by William Hettel, President of the Steuben Society