

# Der Maibaum

Deutschheim Verein Rundschreiben

Vol. 1 No. 1

## Viewpoint Ein Augenblick

Spring 1993

Welcome to the premier issue of *The Maibaum*, the newsletter presented by The Deutschheim Association for and about Midwest German immigrants and German-Americans. Each issue will be packed with informative, interesting articles and pictures about German life in the 19th Century.

Deutschheim State Historic Site is the only State-wide museum of German culture in Missouri. It is the only museum of German traditions and heritage anywhere which is interested in sharing peasant & middle class German ways with the public. Deutschheim houses expanding exhibits on peasant arts and crafts, peasant gardening techniques, and peasant culture, as well as having two furnished middle class houses with which to contrast and illustrate the differences between middle class

preferences and peasant traditions. The museum is constantly searching for more information on this important, vital, and large immigrant group which has had such a profound effect on the development of the entire Midwest, especially Missouri.

We hope you will enjoy the newsletter, and that you will do more than subscribe. We want you to share with us your own special memories of growing up in German families and communities. We want to know where your immigrant ancestors came from in the Old Country: the villages where they were born, their occupations before coming here, how many came with them, and where they settled.

We want to know about the towns and farms they created in the New World.

We want to know about their everyday lives: their likes and dislikes, their churches, their favorite foods, their buildings and gardens and furnishings and the games they played. We want to know about particular ways they celebrated life's special events.

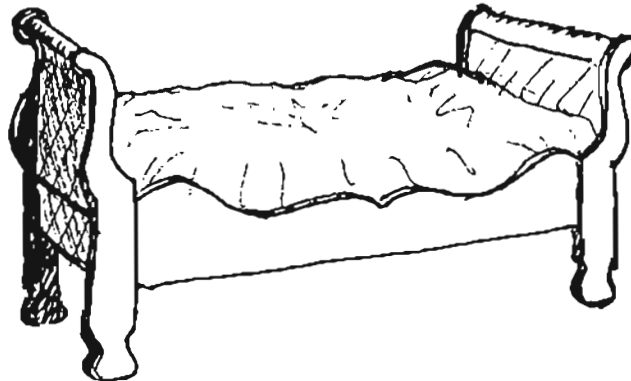
This kind of information is vital to our better understanding of our German ancestors. It will influence everything done at Deutschheim State Historic Site, especially the development of future exhibits.

**Join us!** Become a member of **The Deutschheim Assn.** and receive *The Maibaum* regularly!

**NEXT ISSUE:** more on peasant women's clothing, to be followed by what the men wore. On-going columns on food, gardens, folkways, and traditional life.

## Recent Acquisitions Kürzliche Anschaffungen

Deutschheim State Historic Site is delighted to announce a major acquisition. Deutschheim has been given one of two beds brought to Montgomery County in the 1860s by Paul Kiderlen, and featured in Charles van Ravenswaay's *The Arts and Architecture of German Settlements in Missouri*. The bed is the gift of Paul's granddaughter Edna Scharnhorst of Hermann and her daughter Jane McQuie of Montgomery City. It joins the previously yes-Kiderlen Collection. The the Biedermeier Bed-Gentner House where it furnishing of that room. high style early 19th C. into Missouri by early man craftsmen's efforts designs on the frontier.



established and important bed will go on display in room at the Pommerwill complete the major The bedroom combines Biedermeier, brought emigrants, and local Ger-to duplicate Biedermeier

# THE DEUTSCHHEIM ASSN. *Deutschheim Verin*

Dear Friends of Deutschheim,

We invite you to celebrate Spring with a membership in The Deutschheim Association, a committee of historically-minded supporters formed to support the efforts of Deutschheim State Historic Site. Deutschheim is the only American institution of its kind dedicated to researching, exploring and demonstrating facets of German peasant life in the 19th Century. The Association will publish *The Maibaum* quarterly, host social gatherings at Deutschheim, provide docents for special tours, financially support special needs of the site which are not met by state funding, and supplement historical data from our own experiences.

A portion of any contribution you make to The Deutschheim Association will be tax deductible. As a non-profit institution, Deutschheim is under great pressure to control costs while maintaining the superior facility you have come to expect from us.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please be generous with your initial contribution so the work we have begun can continue and blossom.

*Lois Hoerstkamp*

**Lois Hoerstkamp, Treasurer**

## BECOME AN ASSOCIATION MEMBER

Deutschheim State Historic Site has intrigued, delighted and inspired people of all ages and interests since it opened to the public in 1984.

Now its time to become a Member of the Deutschheim Association and enjoy these many benefits:

\* **A 10% discount** on all purchases made at the Museum Shop (excluding shipping charges)

\* **Unlimited free admission** to the Site and special admission privileges to major exhibitions for a full year.

\* **Subscription** to the Members' newsletter *The Maibaum* to be published quarterly.

\* **Opportunity** to join **guided Site tours** for Members only.

\* **Free admission** to lecture series, seminars, films and concerts

## MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

### **Newsletter Only:**

An individual subscription to *The Maibaum* \$12.00

### **Individual..**

A cookbook entitled *Hermann Cookbook* and an individual membership card will be issued.

(\$10.00 is deductible) \$25.00

**Senior Citizen/Student** \$15.00

### **Dual/Family.**

A cookbook entitled *Great German Recipes* is your premium plus separate membership cards for husband and wife, or for two individuals at the same address. Children 17 and under admitted free with card-holding adult.

(\$25.00 is tax deductible) \$35.00

### **Curator's Club.**

A cookbook entitled *The Flour Is Different* is your premium plus Two gold cards, each admitting two adults to the Site (along with children 17 and under)

(\$40.00 is tax deductible) \$50.00

### **Director's Club.**

Your choice of any cookbook mentioned above plus An opportunity to support significantly the Site's programs.

(\$85.00 is deductible) \$100.00

I enclose the following to initiate my membership in The Deutschheim Association:

- \*  Newsletter Subscription \$12.00
- \*  Individual Membership: \$25.00
- \*  Senior Citizen/Student Membership \$15.00
- \*  Dual/Family Membership \$35.00
- \*  Curator's Club \$50.00
- \*  Director's Club, \$100.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your Check to The Deutschheim Assn., P.O. Box 16, Hermann, MO 65041

## *Apples in German Cookery*

Apples were widely grown in Central Europe, and apple trees were among the first things German emigrants planted when they arrived in the New World. Germans were far more creative in the use of apples in their meals than Anglo-Americans, and featured the fruit not just in desserts but in traditional main courses. Apples were combined with one key vegetable ingredient: potatoes or cabbage or sauerkraut. These are *eintopf*, one-pot, dishes which lend themselves to long slow cooking, and were a mainstay of farm cookery in the homeland and in Missouri where all members of the family were gone for long hours, yet needed a meal as soon as the working day ended. These recipes are adaptable for electric slow cookers, so today's families can enjoy them too. No recipe survives for centuries unless it's good! Try some food history tonight.

The two featured traditional recipes start with an equal amount by weight of tart flavorful apples (Winesap or Granny Smith) to potatoes or cabbage. Once, German-owned orchards produced apples for market all across Missouri. Today only a few remain; some of the best are found in

Perry County. For recipes such as these nothing beats newly harvested tasty cooking apples direct from the farm or a good roadside stand.

Use your own judgment on the amount of onion to include.

*Himmel und Erde* (Heaven and Earth). A favorite in northwest and central Germany. Take an equal amount of peeled, cubed potatoes and pared, sliced apples—one to three pounds each, depending on the size of your family and your pot; add one to two cups water and slow cook until just soft (check from time to time to be sure it doesn't get too dry). Add onions sautéed in fat until transparent (Germans would have used goose grease, lard, bacon, or sausage fat, depending on what

they had available; you can use vegetable oil if you wish) and stir the whole together fairly vigorously, or serve potatoes and apples separately. (Today's German cookbooks suggest using apple sauce mixed into hot mashed potatoes as a way of speeding up the preparation of this dish if you're in a hurry and have leftovers.) Pour melted butter lightly over the top. Add sliced *wurst* as a side dish, and a green salad.

*Kumbis* or *Gedamptes Kraut*. This is a German Swiss and south German dish. Take equal amounts of sliced apples and shredded white or Savoy cabbage, as above. Interlayer these ingredients, starting with the apples, then cabbage, then diced onion, then pre-cooked deboned smoked ham hock or *wurst* slices (this layer can be left out entirely if you wish), then repeating the layering, ending with cabbage. Moisten the whole with water or the reduced broth created by cooking the ham hock, or some other flavorful stock, and let it simmer slowly for several hours. Check that it does not get too dry. (Some like this a bit soupy and serve it with a good crusty bread; others prefer it to be solid.)



# Gardens *Die Garten*

## *Spring Gardens at Deutschheim*

Since 1992 the gardens have been under extensive development to return them to appearances appropriate to Deutschheim's two historic houses: at the Pommer-Gentner House an 1830s-1840s kitchen garden and at the Strehly House a late 19th C. flower and wine grape area.

In the Pommer-Gentner "useful garden" you will find among the archaic food plants Good King Henry (Güter Heinrich). The Site is indebted to the State Government of Lippe-Detmold for sending the Güter Heinrich seed, which was raised at the Detmold Open Air Museum in northwestern Germany. Deutschheim's garden is also home for the rare ruby orach, various cresses, and other once-common salad greens. Spinach, a descendant of Güter Heinrich, replaced many of these about 1840, so it has been included.



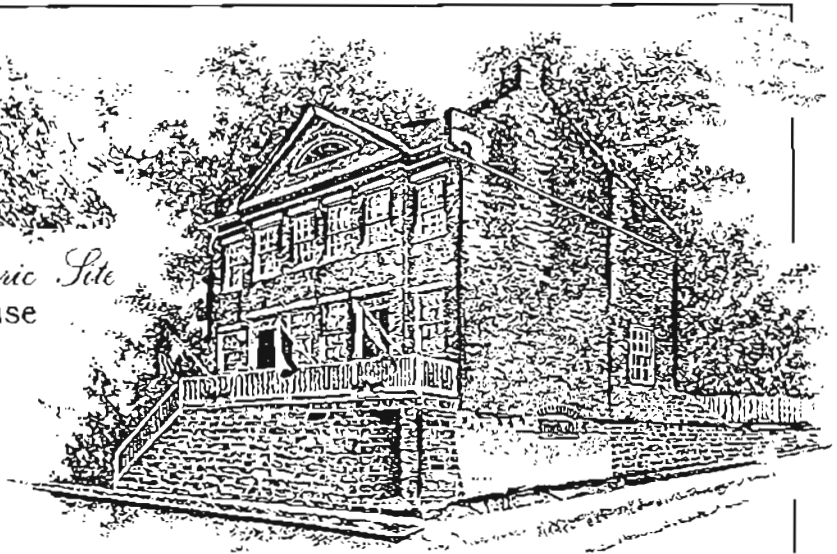
A 1989 Hermann German back yard, planted right up to the house. A grape arbor, peach trees, corn, beans, late cabbage, and a potato patch are present amidst a host of other plants.

Hamburg parsley and celeriac were grown for their roots. Kohlrabi, kale, broccoli (brünkole), and other members of the cabbage family are there; so are old varieties of potatoes, parsnips, beets, turnips, rutabagas, and mangelwurzels.

An 1826 rose, still carried in a local nursery's 1864 catalog, *Königin von Danemark*, can be seen at the Pommer-Gentner House. At the Strehly House seven old roses will bloom this May and June, among them the 1843 *Souvenir de la Malmaison* and the 1872 *Reine Victoria*. The collection includes moss, damask, cabbage, and bourbon roses: photographs of the Strehly back yard show they were enjoyed there a hundred years ago.

Look for these early 19th C. German features at the Pommer-Gentner House: more woven wattle fencing to continue the installation begun in 1992, a wattle gate, a skep house to protect the straw beehives, and tanbark paths. The Strehly yard features a late 19th C. double-heart picket fence along which, in the best German gardening tradition, a variety of old flowering cultivars can be found lined up. You are sure to see some of your favorites.

*Deutschheim State Historic Site*  
Pommer-Gentner House  
Hermann, MO  
Circa 1840



## *APPLES, cont'd...*

If this is prepared without meat, flavor it while cooking by adding vinegar and sugar with the water: 4 TBS vinegar and 3 TBS sugar to 2 quarts sliced cabbage and apple; and sauté the onion in butter or bacon grease before adding the rest to your pot.

Both these dishes are open to endless variation within the theme outlined. The cabbage-apple ratio can be altered and both recipes can involve large or very small servings of *wurst* or smoked pork. In the old days there were plenty of cabbages, onions, potatoes, and apples, but German farm families often had only limited amounts of meat in their daily rations. This changed dramatically when they emigrated, and many writers commented on the large quantities of pork Germans consumed in the New World. So these recipes will be authentic served either way.

### ***1855 Remedy for Fever, Chills & Ague***

Take one pint of sweet Milk and one tablespoonfull of ground ginger, mixed thoroughly, and heated over the fire as warm as it can be drank, when the chill comes on or continues. Repeat the dose once or twice, if necessary, and the cure will be effected. N.B. If the system be costive, an aperient may be necessary in order to prepare it properly for the above prescription.

## **Meet The Staff** *Das Personal*

### ***Ilse Leichsenring Hochhalter, Tour Guide***



Like speaking German? So does Ilse! It is hard to imagine Deutschheim without her. Born in Hamburg, the daughter of a Ph.D. in German Culture from the University of Berlin, Ilse is Deutschheim's primary translator and the main German linguist. She is a font of information on life in the Old Country, and serves as the primary contact person when the site deals with museums and suppliers in Germany. She has brought Deutschheim many good things in her seven years' association with the site. She is unforgettably charming in her reproduction peasant clothing, and is always a joy on a tour. During fests the chances are good that you will find her at the Strehly House knitting stockings to a traditional intricately-ribbed pattern taught her by her mother; at other times, when not conducting a tour, she works on 19th Century manuscripts and microfilm.

She is available, with prior arrangement, to conduct German-language tours. Call the Deutschheim office at 314/486-2200.



5/10

## *Early 19th Century Peasant Clothing*

The rural Germans who arrived in Missouri from the 1830s to the 1850s landed in the New World wearing their native costumes. While middle class clothing was much the same in Europe as in North America, country people had their own styles of dress and their own local clothing customs. For the few months or years that an immigrant wore what had come from the homeland, he or she stood out in any Anglo American crowd. Those who grew up in the US had a much different idea of proper dress. Occasional references hint at the differences (see in particular Friedrich Julius Gustorf's 1830s journal and letters published as *The Uncorrupted Heart* by his descendant Fred Gustorf), but none of this early clothing seems to have survived intact to the present in Missouri. (We suspect some of it has ended up in quilt tops.)

Intensive research into German museum collections and German printed sources has provided Deutschheim State Historic Site with pictures, written descriptions, and even patterns from which early 19th C. period clothing has been recreated as accurately as modern fabrics will allow. This is what you see on Deutschheim's tour guides during fests and when large group tours are hosted. Here are some fascinating facts

about peasant clothes.

The fabrics most used at that time were linens, a linen-wool blend (linsey-woolsey), wool, Indian cottons, and chintz. Silk, satin, velvet, lace, and brocades were reserved for fest clothing. Leather might be used for utilitarian garments or for dress, depending on its quality and type.

Linen, a major industry in many parts of Central Europe, was produced in a variety of weights, from a thin voile to the heaviest canvas. It was the basis for a second important industry, a way of creating printed textiles by using wax resists and indigo dye known as *blaudruckerei*, and which decorated many of the fabrics worn by peasants as work and as going to town clothing. Indigo was cheap and was so common a colorant for working class clothing that in France it was known as *Workers' Blue*. It was also the color of the blue jeans produced by a German immigrant in California, Levi Strauss, for the Gold Rush miners.

### **Women's and Girls' Clothing**

The basic woman's outfit consisted of a long sleeveless undergarment, a blouse, two to four petticoats, a full skirt, and a tight sleeveless top, ending at the waist, which served as an exterior corset. The top had no darts. It was cut much

as upper class women's bodices had been in the late 18th Century, and flattened the breasts. In Holland, where a similar top was worn, it was boned, but we know of no boned German tops. It was constructed of two layers of stout twilled linen, and even though the basic style is that of an earlier aristocracy German women quickly adopted hooks and eyes when these came on the market in the late 1820s. The style may seem conservative, but they weren't above getting rid of uncomfortable laces in favor of the then modern hooks. The outer fabric, tended to be a utilitarian dark hue and was probably most often indigo blue; the lining was white. The cut of the bodice made working in it practicable, with slashes at the waist to permit bending, and artfully designed, non-binding armholes.

A German peasant woman's skirt contained four and a half yards of fabric. As with the bodice, it was generally a dark utilitarian shade which would not show dirt easily. It was a sturdy linen twill similar to a modern denim, though in winter it might be wool.



# Our German Heritage *Unser deutsches Erbgut*

## *Clothing, continued...*

The skirt was made into four elaborate sets of folds to fit, a band was stitched on, and a large opening was left for ease of putting on and for access to her pocket. Her petticoats were worn on top, and had elaborate embroidery and fancy buckle closures, but German women seem to have kept their pockets to themselves and not used them as a form of adornment.

woolen or quilted petticoats for warmth.

By American 19th C. standards, her skirt was far too short. It was usually twelve to fourteen inches off the ground, to permit her to work freely, run up stairs, climb fences, and do whatever she had to do around the farm without having to either tie her skirt up or constantly grab it up in one hand.

Her blouse might have had long sleeves gathered to a band at the wrist or left as

open tubes, or for summer it might have had short puffed banded sleeves. The fullness of the sleeve was gathered by three rows of smocking just below the seam where it joined the shoulder. Every piece in the blouse was either a rectangle or a square, and a square gusset under the arm, set on the bias, permitted more free movement than most shirts do today.

She had no sewn-in pockets.

She wore a flat bag with a horizontal slit opening under her skirt, with long tapes to tie around her waist. In Sweden and Norway such pockets were worn on top, and had elaborate embroidery and fancy buckle closures, but German women seem to have kept their pockets to themselves and not used them as a form of adornment.

Where women in Holland and Scandinavia used fancy stitchery to decorate their bodices, their pockets, and other clothing items, German women seem to have restricted their fancywork to the collars and cuffs of their blouses. They enjoyed white-work, as did all seamstresses in northern Europe, and they also sometimes embroidered towels and other household linens in elaborate traditional cross stitch designs, but in their clothing they preferred to buy printed or weave striped materials, and let the bright colors and varied patterns suffice. Clothing could be gaudy, with rich reds, oranges, yellows, purples, lime greens, and a range of blue shades and darker greens to enliven them.

In addition to the basic dress just described, German women wore an apron and a scarf. The apron might wrap around the wearer and almost conceal her skirt, or it might be narrower.

In the first half of the century it was almost always a colored cloth of some kind. For everyday use it was probably solid indigo or a perhaps a floral piece of *blaudruckerei*. For fests a well-to-do peasant woman might have a silk or even brocade apron, several of which have survived in German collections to demonstrate how proud their owners once were of them. By the early 19th Century the scarf, worn around the shoulders and tucked into the front of the bodice for additional warmth or simply for decoration, was often a gaily printed multicolor cotton square much like today's bandanna. For fests the scarf might be embroidered silk, but for everyday use, especially in winter, it was probably just as often a woolen square.

Few women had coats. They also did not yet have sweaters, which do not seem to be adopted by German country people until the 20th Century. One put on more layers if one was cold. In regions of Schleswig-Holstein a tabard lined with heavy flannel was put on over everything else. It had tapeties at the waist, and if nothing else probably helped as a windbreaker. Similar but longer garments can be seen in 17th Century Dutch paintings, lined with fur for the wealthy. The only difference between a woman's clothing and that of a girl was size.

(TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT ISSUE)



# Museum Shop *Museumsgeschäft*

*For the Discriminating Shopper...*

Going to Germany this year? Or just thinking of brushing up on your spoken German? Deutschheim's Museum Shop carries a number of books and tapes to add to your enjoyment and expertise.

Consider ***Listen and Learn German*** (\$8.95; tape and study book) or the pocket-sized ***Say It In German*** (\$2.95) and ***Conversational German*** (\$3.95).

Have you ever read ***These Strange German Ways?*** It deals with present-day customs in the Old Country, some of which aren't new...you may recognize them from your Missouri German childhood.

It's fascinating, whether you plan to travel in Germany or not. (\$3.75)

For those trying to read 19th C. German script, Deutschheim can supply ***Witter's Deutsche-Englische Fibel***, a reprint of the 1886 school primer once used to teach small Midwest children how to shape their letters.

German script was completely different from the Palmer Method most of us learned. A must for genealogists. (\$4.75)

Some of the finest writers of the Western World were German poets, now sadly much neglected in this country. Deutschheim offers you a chance to learn why Germans once adored their poets. Try ***Introduction to German Poetry***, which has the originals with English translations (\$3.95), or ***Listen and Learn German Poetry***, a tape & book combination (\$8.95), and get to know Goethe and Schiller for yourself.

**Members receive a 10% discount on purchases.** All items mailed from the shop require a modest packing and postage fee. Or drop by the museum, take advantage of your discount, and check out the full range of possibilities for gifts and for yourself.



## **SPECIAL and ONE OF A KIND!**

We are proud to offer chances on an 1880s pattern piece of needlepoint. In the 19th C. needlepoint was known as "Berlin Work" because so much of it came from Germany. This is not a kit! It was worked from a period pattern. The proud owner will definitely be the only one in the whole Midwest with this! Perfect for yourself or for a present. If offered for sale, it would be priced at over \$200.00, but you may buy a chance for \$1.00 or 6 for \$5.00. Drawing in October. Picture and full description next issue. Come see it on display in the Shop.



## *Deutschheim State Historic Site.*

Deutschheim (Deutsch = German, Helm = home) was a term used by several early German writers to describe 1830s-1840s Missouri. The region extending from St. Louis to Boonville on the Missouri River plus an area centered around Perry and Ste. Genevieve Counties along the Mississippi became the new home of thousands of German immigrants in the 19th Century. Pockets of settlement occurred south and west of Sedalia and in the southwest corner of Missouri. By 1860 over half of Missouri's foreign-born residents were German. Today at least 50% of Missourians claim at least one grandparent of German ancestry.

Germans from all walks of life left their homeland to come to the United States, to Missouri's great benefit. Some were highly educated professionals and university graduates at a time when very few people achieved that distinction anywhere: professors, physicians, scientists, lawyers, merchants, ministers, musicians, and artists. Most who came were not of the middle classes, and chose to leave their homeland because of collapsing rural economies in which jobs were destroyed and countless farm laborers and artisans were thrown out of work. Nearly every one of them tried to reestablish in the new land that which they had most valued in the old.

It was a risky and brave jump into the unknown, especially in the early period (1830-1850) when Missouri was still primarily a frontier with vast tracts of unpopulated land.

Missouri owes an enormous debt to both: to middle class Germans for establishing schools, libraries, institutions of higher learning, newspapers, a wide array of cultural opportunities, and a variety of successful businesses and industrial concerns; and to German peasants for opening up the land and creating prosperous farms and villages where wilderness had existed.

Many peasants wrote home about their good fortune and were followed to the new land by friends and relatives.

Whenever possible they settled close together, making enclaves of the Old World in the New where many German regional customs and variants of language were preserved for generations.

Deutschheim State Historic Site was created in 1979 to preserve, protect, and share Missouri's German culture, heritage, crafts, folkways, foodways, life styles, and traditions with visitors.

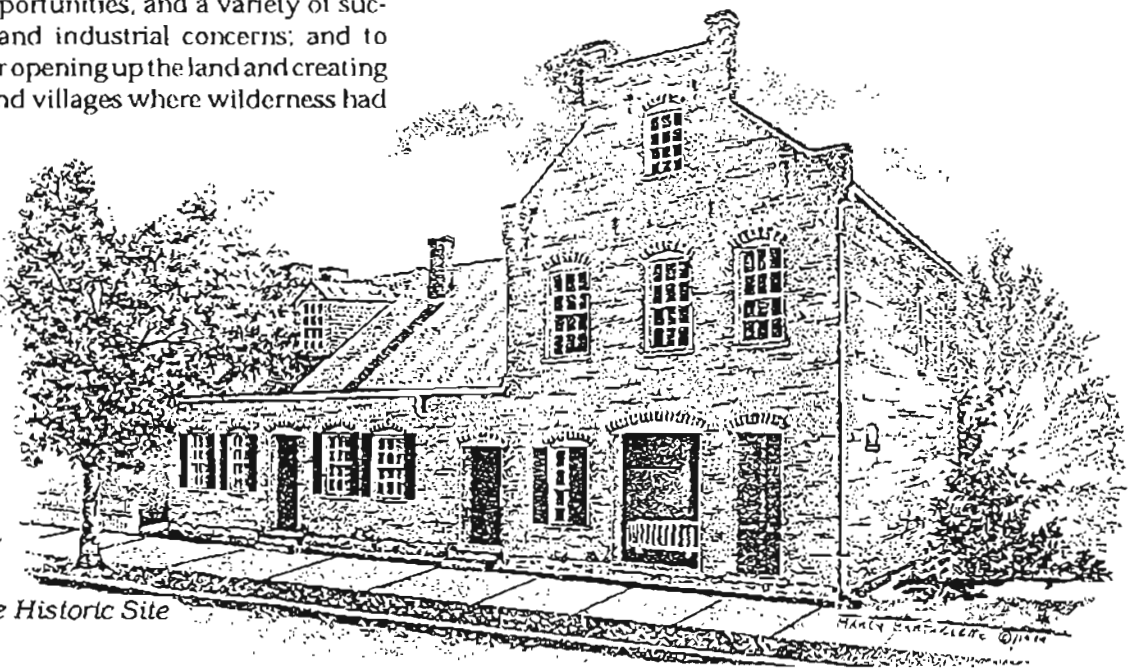
Deutschheim opened to the public in 1984 and has been undergoing continual growth and development ever since.

### TIME TRAVEL: the Pommer-Gentner House and the Strehly House and Winery

Begun within a couple of years of each other, they illustrate different building traditions. Caroline Pommer's 1840 house is an example of high-style German *Klassismus* (neoclassicism); it differs from Greek Revival in its restraint and austerity of design. Many middle-class German settlers chose *Klassismus* for their houses.

On the other hand, Carl Procopius Strehly's house, built in stages from 1842 to 1869, has a fine traditional German vernacular front and is representative of 19th C. German brick buildings constructed throughout the Mid West. The Strehly complex was the site of a renowned early German-language newspaper which vehemently opposed slavery. The winery was added after the Herrmann City Council began to actively encourage wine production in the 1840s. Wine became the basis of a large 19th Century industry which has been successfully revived in recent years.

The Pommer-Gentner House is furnished for the 1830s-1840s; The Strehly House for the 1860s-1880s. The Winery and the Print Shop hold folk arts, crafts, and traditions displays. The gardens contain rare heritage plants.



*Strehly House*

Circa 1840s

Deutschheim State Historic Site  
Hermann, MO

# Folkways Volksbräuche

## From a German's mid-19th C. Pocketbook Notes.

### Keeping Grapes

There are many sorts, such as the Diana, Isabella, Clinton, etc, that are easily kept through the winter. One practice has generally been to take a sea chest, place a layer of grapes in the bottom, over this spread a newspaper, then another layer of grapes, and another paper, and so alternately till the box is filled. Then set it away in a cool airy place, where the mercury will not run below 30 deg. above. We have kept them until February in this way, by keeping the box in an upper room where a stove pipe passed through, being careful when there was an extreme cold spell to set the boxes near the pipe and cover them with blankets.

Another method is to take a large box and put in the bottom about six inches of sawdust or tanbark.

Pack the grapes as described above, in a box one foot less in size. Place this box in the large one on to the sawdust or tanbark, and around the sides and over the top pack in with the same material. Set this box away in the loft of the barn and when extremely cold weather sets in, cover it well with hay. Grapes have been kept in this way, and taken out in April as fresh and plump as when packed away.

—Small Fruit Instructor.

### Hair Oil

Take equal parts of pure Olive oil (sweet oil) and cold-pressed castor oil. To a pint of this mixture add one gill of alcohol and the same of Cologne. If desired, it can be colored by dissolving a good sized pinch of cinnabar in the alcohol and straining before mixing with the other materials.

### Boiled Clocks

Common brass clocks may be cleansed by immersing the works in boiling water. Rough as this treatment may appear, it works well, and I have for many years boiled my clocks, whenever they stop from any accumulation of dust or thickening of oil upon the pivots. They should be boiled in pure rain water, and dried on a warm Stove or near the fire.

### Artificial Honey

Dissolve seven pounds of common brown sugar in one quart of water. Mix in it two pounds of good strained honey, and stir in the eighth of an ounce of cream of tartar. Boil a few minutes and skim, and as the editor of the Agriculturist says, "We presume you will have as good honey as you will make by any patent process offered you."

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