Millions Cried... No One Listened

Conference 2012 Agenda

Friday, April 20

9:00-9:50am: Erika Witt

Bio: Erika Witt was born in Budapest, Hungary in 1942 to parents of German descent. She and her family fled to Austria in 1944. The family emigrated to the U.S in 1952 as displaced persons. Erika held a forty year career as a language teacher.

Speaking on:

Erika will give a detailed account of her years in postwar Austria. She will also speak on the family heritage that stayed with them throughout their journey to America. Erika will be sharing her first experiences of economic and emotional struggle while adjusting to the new country. She will also share her father's memories through his poetry

10:00-11:00am: Movie 1-History

The film series will begin with the history of the various groups of German peoples who migrated to the eastern European countries. It will begin in the year 1000 and come forward to the year 1943.

11:10-12:00pm: Bruni Adler
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Bio: Bruni Adler escaped with her family from East to West Germany as a child, but even after this event she spent all her summers with her grandparents behind the Iron Curtain.

Bruni Adler holds an MSS from Bryn Mawr College and an MSW from the University of Tübingen, Germany. She has worked for many years as a family therapist in Germany and in the US, especially with abused children and their new adoptive families.

She was a Public Radio producer in Boulder, Colorado of a weekly program on international politics.

Since 2004 she has published three books:

„Bevor es zu spät ist – Begegnungen mit der Kriegsgeneration“ (Before it is too late – encounters with the war generation)

„Geteilte Erinnerung – Polen, Deutsche und der Krieg“. („Divided Memory – Poland, Germany and the War“)

„Zerrissene Leben – Hitler, Stalin und die Folgen“. („Torn Lives – Hitler, Stalin and their legacy“)

Speaking on:

Bruni Adler escaped with her family from East to West Germany as a child, but even after this event she spent all her summers with her grandparents behind the Iron Curtain. She will be speaking about the mostly unknown fate of hundreds of thousands of ethnic Germans who lived in Russia when World War II broke out - their deportation, suffering and dying in countless labor camps.
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12:10-12:50pm: Lunch

12:25-12:50pm: A reading during lunch by: Alexandra Bitzer

Bio: Alexandra Bitzer is currently living in Philadelphia and will be graduating with an MFA in Fiction from Sarah Lawrence College this May. She has dedicated her life in researching these terrible years in ethnic German history to make this unknown history known. At present she’s working on a novel based on her grandparent’s years in eastern Europe. She traveled to Eastern Europe in January to visit her grandfather’s hometown (Batschki-Brestowatz), some of the camp memorials, and to find some of the former camp grounds that have not been marked (Milchehalle and Old Mill).

Speaking on:

This is an overview of Alexandra’s novel and possibly a passage she’ll read for us. One thread is built of short stories narrated by characters going through the horrors of the expulsion and extermination of Danube Swabians/ethnic Germans from the former Yugoslavia. The other thread is a contemporary perspective of a young woman on the path to discovering the invisible truth of her history, the betrayal of her people, while discovering quite a bit about herself and her own betrayals.

1:00-2:20pm: Movie 2, 1944-Fleeing Home, Sent to Ukraine or Russia

This film will focus on the fleeing of the groups running from the Russian forces as well as the number of people being sent to Ukraine and Russia before the Potsdam Conference took place. It will also tell the story of the
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children being separated from their parents and moved from the Carpathian region.

2:30-3:20pm: Rose Matico

Bio: Rose Matico received her Bachelor's degree in Biochemistry from Temple University followed by some graduate studies in Biochemistry Department at Temple University Medical School. She currently holds a position as a Protein Biochemist for a major pharmaceutical company.

Speaking on:

Rosalie Matico, born in 1962 and raised in Philadelphia, has been active throughout her life in the Danube Swabian Community and is currently President of the Philadelphia Danube Swabian Association. Her father, Adam Mattes, born in Batsch-Brestowatz was also very active in the Donauschwaben Community, both at the local and national levels. Her mother, Maria (nee Dickmann), was born in Filipowa and is a survivor of the Gakova camp. The topic Rose will be discussing: The Impact of the Survivor Experience on the Next Generation.

3:30-5:00pm: Movie 3, January 1945-June 1945 Conscripted, Hiding, Fleeing

From being chased out of their homes to being tricked when trying to come back, this is the story being told in the third film of the series.
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Saturday, April 21

9:00-9:45 Language and Dialects Part II

Julius Loisch, Marlene Fricker and Adam Dickmann:

Bio: Mr. Loisch was born in 1931 in a village in Slovakia called Muhlenbach. His grade school education began in Unterschwaben in a small Swabian community by the border of Poland. Two of his high school years were spent at Kesmark in Slovakia. The school children were evacuated to Austria/Germany in September of 1944. He graduated from high school in Dinkelsbühl/Germany. After earning his Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering he spent one year at White Sand Missile Range followed by working on Aerospace projects like Solar Wind spectrometer (Apollo 12 lunar landing), various Military defense projects followed by developments in medical instrumentation. He retired in 1992.

Bio: Marlene has been a member of the United German Hungarian Club of Phila & Vicinity and active in their Cultural Group since 1965 participating in every cultural aspect of the organization. She has a BFA in Dance from Adelphi University. For 20 years she was the primary instructor and administrator of Marlene Blank School of Dance. Marlene currently works as a Supervisor at Abington Memorial Hospital. She is furthering her education at Gwynedd Mercy College in the field of Allied Health. She is the mother and step mother of six and grandmother of a 2 year old. Marlene has worked together with
members of the United German Hungarians and the Philadelphia and Trenton Donauschwaben Clubs on three Cultural Exhibits of primarily Danubeswabian artifacts. She was also instrumental in taking a group of 25 members of her club to visit the Donauschwaebisches Zentralmuseum in Ulm in 2008.

A brief summary of the history and origin of the dialects of the Eastern and Central European Germans

The immigration of German peoples from different areas of Germany or Middle-Europe included their various spoken Dialects. In part, they varied quite strongly. The German language spoken during medieval times in Germany, today, is called Middle High German. As an older speech level it is a collection of local dialects (Mundarten-Vernacular).

The multitude of German dialects taken to the settlements and the resulting mixture of it presents even today a challenge to the linguists.

Linguists grouped this multitude of dialects contained in Slovakia prior to the expulsion. Accordingly we can group the following language islands in which more or less a singular dialect had been used:

1. Pressburg/Bratislava/Pozsony und surrounding area
2. Deutschproben/Nemecké Pravno/Németpróna
3. Kremnitz/Kremnica/Krömöbánya
4. Ober-Unter-Zips/ Spiš/Szepes

In addition there were in Dunajetz, Tschermeeran, Potoksch, etc.

5. Schwaben, Unter Schwaben, Oberschwaben from the Polish bordered area

9:45-10:25am: Movie 4: July 1945-December 1945-Labor camps, Death camps, Orphans

So much was going on by this time. The camps were losing people in great numbers and at the same time the children whose parents had passed away were being taken to orphanages run by the Communist governments. This was also the time most escapes were planned and acted upon. This film is the most complex because of the multiple situations being explained.
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10:35-11:10am: Kearn Schemm Presenting interviews from Partisan guards of Tito's camps.

Kearn Schemm was born in New Jersey and currently lives in Virginia. He is the Vice President of the German World Alliance and has spent most of his adult life working with and for refugees. He is committed to obtaining justice for victims of ethnic persecution, particularly the German victims of ethnic cleansing, deportations and internment.

Mr Schemm will speak on the topic, "The Incredible Shrinking Nation:" How the area inhabited by Germans has decreased in size throughout the centuries.

11:20-12:05pm: Rudigar Stoehr

12:10-1:00 Lunch

12:15-1:00pm: lunch with Ann Morrison

Bio: Ann Morrison found a way to do two things she loves the most, research history and talk to hundreds of people. She never knew her two passions combined would unearth an untouched subject that should have been known all along. Her film series, Millions Cried...No One Listened is the product of the research found about The Largest Expulsion In History. The situations that happened before, during and after will uncover a startling reality.

Ann will give the attendees an open floor for questions about the series and the history within.
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1:10-1:50pm: Movie 5, January 1946-December 1947 Escape, Refugee Camps, Work Contracts

This film will take a step back to 1944 and coming up to the 50's explaining how the Refugee Camps were run along with the ill treatment pushed upon the eastern German population. The contracts being fulfilled will be brought into the series taking the audience from one kind of imprisonment to another.

2:00-2:50pm Anna Hartmann & Johanna Reiter

Bio: Anna Hartmann, born Anna Krachtus in Nero, Romania in 1937 is a wife and mother of three. Anna has vivid memories of her travels with her parents and sister throughout Europe both during and after WWII.

Bio: Johanna Reiter, born Johanna Brenner in Franztal, Yugoslavia in 1932 was 12 years old when the end of WWII marked the beginning of her new life. Her memory holds every detail about growing up in Franztal.

Anna & Johanna will share the memories of their home, their travels and the experiences both good and bad.
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3:00-4:00pm: Movie 6, 1948-present

The sixth film will reflect on the survivors and their descendants. The memories are very strong and often hard to deal with which will be seen through the thoughts of the survivors and their children.

4:10-4:50pm: Meritt Drucker

Bio: Merrit P. Drucker is a retired US Army Officer (1973-1993) currently employed in the private sector. He is conducting research on the Rhine Meadow camps with an objective of obtaining a US apology. He served in Germany from 1987 to 1990 and is currently working with two German researchers and one British writer and of course Mr. James Bacque. They have collected around 40 recent reports from former POWs.

Mr. Drucker will start to answer the question posed by Alfred M. de Zayas in his book, "Nemesis at Potsdam." Why has the expulsion remained little known in the Anglo-American world? The answer will include a summary of post war writings, to include an appeal by the Fulda Council of Bishops to the Allied Control Council (1945), the Allied response, a book review of "Conqueror's Peace" by Andrew Rooney and Oram Hutton, recently released writings by Herbert Hoover, and observations by US forces.

4:50 to 5:00 Closing Comments

Dinner 5:00pm

5:30 Performance by the United German Hungarian Cultural Group