

# GCS

German-Canadian Studies at The University of Winnipeg

## Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first issue of 2007 – late, but with exciting news about our scholarship recipients, new research completed, and some good news for the field of German-Canadian Studies from British Columbia. This issue focuses on the recipients of the research scholarships and grants. They introduce their innovative work and tell you a bit about themselves. This will be continued in the next issue of the newsletter, to be sent out this year as well. The next issue will also have news about two new emigration exhibitions in Hamburg, Germany, and more book reviews. As always, if you have news for the German-Canadian Studies community, please send them to the editor. And now, enjoy the newsletter!

## Innovative German-Canadian Research

**2007 was the first year in which the fellowship program of the Chair in German-Canadian Studies was funded by the Spletzer Family Foundation (Winnipeg). The successful recipients research the impact of World War One on German communities in Canada and Brazil, and translate important German-language sources about World War One in order for English-speaking readers to better understand Germany's war experience.**

The recipient of the Ph.D. research scholarship (\$13,000 annual, renewable once) is Nicole Pissowotzki of the University of Toronto (Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures). She will explain her research about "Exploring Canada's 'Orient': The Image of the Canadian North in German Literature" in the next edition of the newsletter. Ben Bryce of York University (Department of History) received the M.A. research scholarship (\$9,000 annual, non-renewable) for his comparative study of German migrants in Canada and Argentina. Mark Humphries (University of Western Ontario) and John Maker (University of Ottawa) received the German-Canadian Studies Research Grant (\$2,500) for their work on "Germany's Western Front: Translations from the German Official History of the Great War." The German-Canadian Studies Undergraduate Essay (\$500) was not awarded. Below, the successful applicants explain their research. Applications for the 2008 round of scholarships will be accepted from January 2008 and selected in April 2008. Please note that there will be competitions only for the M.A. scholarship, the Research Grant and the Undergraduate Essay Prize, but not for the Ph.D. scholarship, which is awarded on a biennial basis. For more information, visit <http://germancanadian.uwinnipeg.ca>

### Ben Bryce:

My name is Ben Bryce and I am an MA student in History at York. I am writing a comparative MA thesis about the German communities of southwestern Ontario and the Argentine province of Buenos Aires between 1905 and 1918. I am focusing mainly on two sources: *Das Berliner Journal* from Waterloo County and *Das Argentinische Tageblatt* from Buenos Aires. Specifically, I plan to compare the two papers' discourse about ethnicity



and how that discourse changed during World War I. By comparing, I hope to gain greater perspective on internal and external factors that led to change over time.

A few studies have compared Canada and Argentina's economic development, particularly the boom of wheat production and export from 1870 to 1930. These studies consider immigration as labour. I would like to continue with this comparison of these two states with a common past of territorial and economic expansion but with an emphasis on immigration and ethnicity.

I am spending the second year of my MA in Berlin where I will research and write my thesis. I have scanned many copies of *Das Berliner Journal*. *Das Argentinische Tageblatt* can be found both in Argentina and at the Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut in Berlin.

I study both Canadian and Latin American history. I've spent a year in both Argentina and Germany and am very interested in combining my own international interests with my academic studies. I am very grateful to have received the Spletzer Family Foundation's MA scholarship. It will help me finance my year in Germany and allow for a timely completion of my thesis in May, 2008.

## Mark Humphries and John Maker



The seven part series "Germany's Western Front: Translations from the German Official History of the Great War" will expand Canadian understanding of the Great War by providing the first English language translation of parts the German official history of the First World War, *Der Weltkrieg, 1914 bis 1918*. Because most German records pertaining to the Great War were destroyed by allied bombing in 1945, *Der Weltkrieg* remains the most comprehensive source on the German side of the conflict. With an emphasis on translating the parts of the series that describe German strategic decision making and operations opposite the British Expeditionary Force – of which the Canadians were a part – the series will aim to familiarize readers with the 'other side of the hill' and will add to the excellent work of historians such as Holger Herwig and Robert Foley.

Supplemented with translations from German regimental histories and other official works of the *Reichsarchiv*, this series will remind the English language Canadian reader that because war is an inherently mutual experience, we must look at the collective experience if we are to fully understand the conflict and its meaning. It is hoped that this series of translations will encourage students to delve deeper into the remains primary and begin to re-evaluate the conflict from a post-nationalist perspective.

The first volume of the series, covering the year 1915, will be published in 2008 and will be followed by the first of two volumes on the year 1914 in 2009.



Mark Humphries is a PhD candidate at the University of Western Ontario where he holds a SSHRC CGS and is completing his dissertation on the 1918 Influenza Pandemic under the direction of Dr. Jonathan Vance. Humphries has published several articles on Canada in the Great War and is currently co-authoring a book with Terry Copp titled *Combat Stress in the 20th Century: the Commonwealth Experience* to be published by the Canadian Defence Academy in 2009. John Maker is a PhD candidate at the University of Ottawa where he is currently working on his dissertation, which examines the lives of Canadian soldiers during the Second World War, and more specifically, what those soldiers did with their 'spare time' to stave off boredom and to maintain morale.

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## Review

Grace Marshall in collaboration with Annemarie Doenne, *Everybody Calls me "Doc": The Story of Annemarie Doenne, M.D.* Priceville, ON: Windridge, 2007. 178 pp. ISBN 978-0-9783085.

"A young girl grows up in Germany as Hitler comes to power, survives World War Two, earns her medical degree, then immigrates to Canada with her husband, eventually setting up practice in rural Ontario." So begins the biography of Annemarie Doenne. The story, which aspires to be a "heartwarming story of inspiration," is based on oral history interviews conducted by Grace Marshall over a period of six months. It proceeds chronologically from early childhood and wartime to emigration, settling in rural Ontario and establishing a practice as well as life at Bootjack Ranch, the Doc's and her husband's dude ranch where they bred Arabian horses. This is a welcome addition to the growing list of German-Canadian autobiographies, biographies, memoirs and other personal narratives. To order a copy, please contact Jim Stopps, 207-935 Royal York Road, Toronto, ON, Canada M8Y 4H1.

## New German Studies Professorship

**The University of British Columbia will soon offer German Studies at its Okanagan campus and pursue the goal of establishing a centre of excellence in Germanic Studies.** A one-million-dollar donation from German-Canadians Klaus and Lydia Reichwald of Kelowna helped to establish the Reichwald Professorship in Germanic Studies, according to a June 7, 2007 media release from the UBC Okanagan. UBC President Stephen Toope said: "This is an important area of cultural scholarship, and one that will certainly flourish in the Okanagan." Fifteen percent of the population of the Okanagan speak German as their mother tongue. The full-time professorship will become part of the Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies and offer courses in German language and culture. "This gift will stand as a lasting legacy not only for the Reichwald family, but for the entire German-Canadian community, and many future generations of UBC Okanagan students," Toope explained. Klaus Reichwald immigrated at the age of 16 and, after an electrical apprenticeship in Edmonton, joined Western Electrical Constructors in 1963. By the mid-1970s, he had become the company's president and is now Chairman and CEO of the Western Group of Companies. "The Reichwalds have started something that will grow," said UBC Okanagan's Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor Alaa Abd-El-Aziz. "We are committed to establishing a respected and influential centre of excellence in Germanic Studies. The importance of German language and culture in the Okanagan is evident not only in the greater community, but right here at UBC Okanagan – the two German language classes offered this year were wait-listed." An advisory committee with community representatives will develop the program of the professorship, including community projects such as a German film festival and public lectures on German cultures. Regional business leaders believe that this professorship will help recruit skilled immigrants from Germany and establish business connections with German companies.

The Chair in German-Canadian Studies was established in 1989 with grants from the Secretary of State's Program for Canadian Ethnic Studies and a group of private philanthropists within the German-Canadian community of Winnipeg. It is located in, and affiliated with, the History Department at the University of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The Chair promotes the teaching of, and research into the history and culture of German-speaking immigrants and their descendants in Canada. It interacts with the German-Canadian community in Winnipeg, Manitoba and the rest of Canada through public lectures and the newsletter. The Chair promotes regional, national and international research through conferences, publications and grants.

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Unless otherwise stated, all articles were written by Alexander Freund  
Submissions of articles, news, reports, and reviews as well as artwork and photos for publication in this newsletter are welcome.

## Review

Patrick Farges, *Le trait d'union. Cultures et identités des exilés germanophones au Canada (1933 à nos jours)* [The Cultural Hyphen. Culture and Identity of German-speaking Refugees in Canada after 1933]. Ph-D Thesis (November 2006), University of Paris 8 (France).

Using personal and institutional archival documents, as well as oral history interviews, Patrick Farges analyses the way in which two groups of German-speaking refugees fleeing from Nazism integrated into the Canadian nation, by appropriating its "cultural grammar", i.e. that of the "multicultural mosaic": Jewish refugees vs. a group of political refugees from the Sudetenland. Farges' choice of sources and his method are particularly innovative and interdisciplinary.

In an historical overview of Canada's management of cultural diversity, Farges firstly evokes the well-known institutional anti-Semitism in the 1930s that led government officials, and more generally Canada's "gatekeepers," to reject German-Jewish refugees and to prefer Social-Democrats from the Sudetenland, who thus benefited straightaway from a comparative advantage. He then shows that the Sudeten-Germans' socialisation before their departure in 1939 influenced their numerous ideological conflicts in Canada. Their political/cultural identity was a way for them to draw closer to the Canadian left while they were able to adopt and adapt the vocabulary of the Canadian mosaic nation. This group was thus in a position to somewhat inflect German-Canadian historiography, even if their "leftist" voices were soon to be forgotten. By giving a careful and detailed insight into the trajectory of this group of migrants, Farges answers Willi Wanka's wish that a "historian of quality" take up this underemphasised issue.

On the other hand, the "Camp Boys," i.e. those German and Austrian (mainly Jewish) refugees in Great-Britain who were interned and transferred to Canada, are relatively well-known in German-Canadian circles. Their long-term acculturation and memory, however, had never been depicted in such detail. Beyond their feeling of being interned in an absurd "compression chamber," the "Camp Boys" found themselves in a kind of "no-man's-land," unable to socialise with German-Canadians, nor to be fully accepted by Canadian Jews. In the course of their life, they have nonetheless preserved private niches of socialisation, as Farges touchingly shows. Finally, he studies how all refugees have tried to inscribe their individual life-story within master narratives of the Canadian "Hyphe/Nation." One example is Henry Kreisel's role as a precursor of Canadian migrant literatures.

Mr. Farges' remarkable and skilful study will profoundly enrich German-Canadian Studies as well as contemporary Canadian History, and one can only hope that this "Meilenstein" soon be published.

Manuel Meune, Université de Montréal



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