

No. 1/2021

p'review

Peace. Inclusion. Equity.



+++ International Rotary & Rotaract Conference in October 2021 +++ Hands-on: Visit of Rondo Center with African-American Community +++ Holocaust Education: A Flensburg Perspective of an Auschwitz Survivor +++ Stumbling Blocks in Memory of 400 Years of Slavery? +++ Lux, lucis - Light - The art of Sandra Schlipkoeter +++ Musician Konstantin Reinfeld blows the Peace Harp +++

www.peaceconference.us

**OCT. 18-23
2021**

A large, sepia-toned portrait of a man, identified as RC Keokuk, occupies the central portion of the page. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie. His expression is serious and contemplative.

**Nationalism: Then & Now —
The RC Keokuk Peace Letters
1932-2022**



printed version is available at www.lulu.com

KEOKUK PEACE LETTERS, llc



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“I am very grateful

to the group of German Rotarians for shedding light on the role of Rotary clubs in Germany during the Nazi dictatorship. Only through an honest reappraisal of the injustices of the past can we learn from them.

I said at the Rotary Assembly last year in San Diego that Rotary is not political. But when things are obviously wrong, we cannot simply look the other way! As we see discrimination, inequality, and racism in many different parts of the world, Rotarians and other people of good will must speak out if solutions are to be found—culture by culture and country by country.

We who have the great fortune to live in democratic countries have the obligation to become active on the basis of our core values and our four-way test.”

Holger Knaack’s Greeting (RC Englewood, NJ, US, April 13, 2021)

When Holger Knaack addressed the International Assembly in San Diego a year ago as incoming president of Rotary International, few in the audience could have realized how prophetic those words would become. On May 25, 1,500 miles away in Minneapolis, a Black man, George Floyd, was killed by a police officer who had arrested him for allegedly using a counterfeit bill. It was a death that started larger conversations about racism around the world.

As the world engaged in a moment of questioning and reflection, Knaack noted that discrimination is shaped by countries and cultures. “You can find racism probably not everywhere, but you can definitely find discrimination everywhere. So we have to go into our history to find the origins in order to fight that,” he said. “Whether that is India or Japan, the United Kingdom or Germany or elsewhere, it is different.

Discrimination depends on history and where it began. You have to dive into your own history.

There are many terrible examples in my country. Every country has to solve its own problems. In Germany, the darkest decade began in the mid-1930s before the war. A group of historians wrote a book* recently describing what happened and how Rotary clubs discriminated against their Jewish members. It is not something to be proud of.

I do not believe in deleting history, but instead, learning from it. Everything has to be put on the table so we can learn for our future. This is not an American problem, this is not just Black Lives Matter — this is a different approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion. I would really love to show Rotary clubs a way they can put this into action that fits into their country and culture.”

Dave King (Rotary Magazine, Chicago, January 2021)

* Rotary under Nazi Rule, p. 20



Yogi Reppmann (left) & Ivy and Tony Conn

*Dear Rotarian Friends,
moin-moin, dear Rotaractors,*

this first issue of our online magazine *p'review—Peace. Inclusion. Equity.*— gives you information about the Rotary Working Conference on October 18-23, 2021 in our American hometown of Northfield, Minnesota, south of Minneapolis. For details check the link below.

Our starting point was the title story, *Nationalism, Then & Now – the Keokuk Peace Letters, 1932-2022*, which had its origins in RC Keokuk, Iowa. This story has to do with two basic Rotarian values: understanding among the peoples of the world and taking action in support of world peace. Ever since the events of January 6, Rotary Clubs here and abroad have been deeply moved by the timeliness of our Zoom–PowerPoint pre-

sentation on this topic. With this as background, the subject area of our Northfield conference will be *Nationalism, Then and Now – How to Shape the Future*. Appropriate ways of dealing with the dark chapters of our history will also be a major focus.

Dr. Jim Hart of the Rotary Club of St. Paul, MN (the 10th Rotary Club founded) visited us in Northfield following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis (the 9th Club) and asked if we could provide a connection between German and American Rotarians in order to learn more about dealing with the dark chapters of our past such as slavery in the United States. Projects such as “Stumbling Blocks”^{*} are currently under discussion in the United States.

Many thanks in advance for your support of this international Rotarian endeavor toward peace!

Tony Conn

(RC Keokuk, Iowa, USA)

Yogi Reppmann

(RC Northfield, MN & RC Flensburg, Germany)

^{*} “Stolpersteine,” brass plaques first installed in pavements in Germany and by now in over a thousand European cities to commemorate individual victims of the Holocaust (cf. p. 40, Matthias Schütt).

p'review

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* Nationalism, Then & Now — How to Shape the Future
 OCT. 18 - 23, 2021 • NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA, USA
 program on back cover and www.peaceconference.us

+++ YOUR RESOURCES +++

dear friends, before we continue with our cover story “the keokuk peace letters”, some information on how to book us for a zoom talk at your next meeting. alternatively you may use a 21-minute video presentation. please forward these resources and invite for our rotary work conference to friends.

+++ GET IN TOUCH +++

meet yogi reppmann and tony conn, founders of the keokuk peace letter project, live via zoom and be among the first to learn about our latest research.



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+++ INVITE +++

ROTARY WORKING CONFERENCE

NATIONALISM THEN & NOW

HOW TO SHAPE THE FUTURE

OCT. 18 - 23 • 2021
nothfield, minnesota

details on back cover and www.peaceconference.us

+++ KEEP UP +++

use our popular presentations concerning the fascinating peace letters from keokuk in your next meeting.

www.peaceconference.us

abstract, short bios and portrait photos of tony conn and yogi reppmann can be downloaded at

www.keokukpeaceletters.com



+++ BE PART OF IT +++

feel encouraged to start researching the stories behind the keokuk peace letters yourself. all the letters from various parts of the world are available to you on:

www.keokukpeaceletters.com

please share your results with us via email to

yogi reppmann:
yogireppmann@gmail.com

tony conn:
conn.tony.2013@gmail.com

read the most moving story behind the peace letter from tallinn (estonia)

www.keokukpeaceletters.com

+++ ENJOY OUR BOOK +++

consider purchasing our book, which contains a reproduction of the original letter map discovered in 2016, plus the complete collection of keokuk peace letters from 1931-32, commentaries, and letters written by paul harris, the founder of Rotary.



available on
lulu.com

Nationalism: Then & Now — The RC Keokuk Peace Letters 1932-2022



Jewett Fulton



Chief Keokuk

The story

we are telling today concerns two of Rotary's essential basic values: mutual understanding among peoples of the world and a commitment to supporting world peace. The story begins ninety years ago. In 1931, the third Rotary Convention outside the United States took place in Vienna.

Rotarians from around the world arrived in the country's capital. Among the 4,300 attendees at the Vienna Conference was the thirty-three-year-old American Jewett Fulton, a member of the Rotary Club of Keokuk, Iowa, a small town on the Mississippi named after the chieftain of a local tribe of Native Americans*.

* Recently it has been brought to our attention that we have misappropriated stories and symbols from Native American culture without their input and permission. The October Rotary/Rotaract Work Conference will deal with this issue.

Fulton

was not only a participant at the Rotary Convention. In addition, he traveled for several weeks throughout Europe, where his impressions were impacted by economic, social, and political tensions in many ways similar to those occurring in the U.S. Dark clouds were forming across Europe and elsewhere in the world. The global economic crisis of 1929 was well into its third year, with no end in sight.

And so, the small club from Keokuk on the Mississippi set out in December 1931 to send a message by letter to all non-English-speaking Rotary Clubs outside the United States. Over five hundred letters were individually typed, addressed, and sent by mail (in the illustration, next page, the letter sent to the Rotary Club of Paris).

Among other things, the letter stated:

"Following the old Indian custom, we invite the Rotary Club of Paris to smoke the Pipe of Peace with us in the spirit, as our expression of international good will and fellowship. - We would be most happy to receive a reply from you, as it is our sincere desire to establish and perpetuate Rotary contacts and friendships outside of our country."



"Looking for a job", ca. 1930



KEOKUK ROTARY CLUB

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W. J. FULTON
G. L. WEISSENBURGER

KEOKUK, IOWA, U. S. A.

December 10, 1931.

Chas. Blum, President,
Paris Rotary Club,
Paris, France.

Dear Rotarian Blum:

We send you greetings from the Rotary Club of
Keokuk, Iowa, U. S. A.

As the city of Keokuk was named for the friendly
chief of the Sac and Fox tribes of American Indians, who many
years ago had their camp here, and as it is located in Iowa,
a state with an Indian name, we feel that it is particularly
fitting that we recall to your memory the Indian ceremonial--
the smoking of the Pipe of Peace.

The Peace Pipe, which is pictured with Chief Keokuk
above, was smoked on all ceremonial occasions by the Indians,
especially on the making of treaties of peace. It was always
offered as the supreme proof of hospitality of an Indian Tribe
to distinguished strangers who visited their camp.

Today one of our members presented the flag of France
to our Club, and told us of the growth and extent of Rotary in
your country. Your flag was placed in a standard together with
flags of other Rotary nations, as a symbol of our regard and
affection for our Rotary neighbors beyond our borders and across
the seas. Following the old Indian custom, we invite the Rotary
Club of Paris to smoke the Pipe of Peace with us in spirit, as
our expression of international good will and fellowship.

We would be most happy to receive a reply from you,
as it is our sincere desire to establish and perpetuate Rotary
contacts and friendships outside of our country.

Sincerely and Rotarily yours,
KEOKUK ROTARY CLUB

W. J. Fulton
Chairman

International Service Committee.

WJF/W

Back to cards

ROTARY CLUB MÜNCHEN



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Altpräsident:
Rechtsanwalt Dr. Anton Graf von Pestalozza
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Emil Hirsch
II. Sekretär:
Direktor Walther Meuschel
Schatzmeister:
Dr. Hans Karl von Mangoldt-Reiboldt
(Hartig & Co.)

München, den 14. Jan. 1932
H/He

Rotary Club Keokuk
Keokuk (Jowa) USA.
30 N, 4th St.

Sekretariat:
Maximilianstr. 4
Hotel 4 Jahreszeiten
Telefon 23072

Telegr.-Adr.:
Rotclub München

Zusammenkünfte:
Dienstags 13 Uhr 30
Restaurant Walterspiel
(Hotel 4 Jahreszeiten)
Maximilianstraße 4

Lieber Rotarier Fulton!

Der RC. München hat sich über den Brief Ihres Clubs und besonders über Ihre handschriftlichen Grüsse herzlich gefreut. Wie schade, dass wir Ihnen kein "Löwenbräu" schicken könnten, denn es würde ja doch in den nächsten Strassenkanal gegossen werden. Wie herzlich gern wir Ihnen einen solchen feuchten Gruss schicken würden, werden Sie selbst wohl wissen. Hoffentlich haben Sie aber bald wieder einmal Gelegenheit herüber nach Deutschland zu kommen. Dann werden alle Münchener Rotarier es sich zur Ehre rechnen, Ihnen Gesellschaft zu leisten. Wir haben ja selbst einen bierbrauenden Rotarier im Club, Rot. Karl Thomass (Thomas- und Paulanerbräu) der Ihnen bestimmt seinen Betrieb theoretisch und praktisch ausgiebigst vorführen wird.

Die Idee Ihres Clubs, dass wir Deutschen "im Geiste" mit Ihnen die Friedenspfeife rauchen sollen, ist köstlich. Wir hatten beim letzten Lunch, als Ihr Brief vorgelesen wurde, leider keine geeignete Pfeife zur Hand und mussten uns daher mit Zigarren begnügen. Hoffentlich war es ein würdiger Ersatz.

Als Ausseres Zeichen unserer Freundschaft senden wir Ihnen nun heute unsere kleine Münchener Clubflagge, die hoffentlich Platz auf Ihrem Tische finden wird — der Masskrug des "Münchener Kindls" wird Sie sicher stets lebhaft an "Löwenbräu" erinnern und zuherüberlocken.

Ferner fügen wir ein Exemplar des "Festbuches" bei, das die Münchener anlässlich ihrer Charterfeier am 7.2.29 allen Freunden überreichten und ausserdem das letzte Heft unserer Distriktszeitschrift "Der Rotarier", das vom RC. München für den 73. Distrikt herausgegeben wird. Wir hoffen, dass dort ein Rotarier genügend Deutsch lesen kann, um Ihnen alles zu übersetzen.

Nochmals vielen Dank und herzliche Rotarygrü-

se

ROTARY-CLUB MÜNCHEN

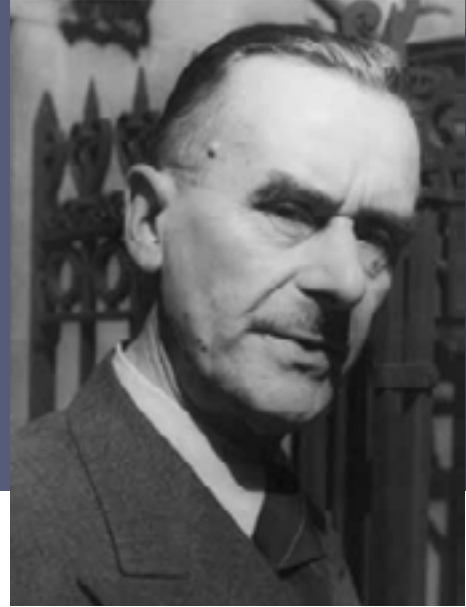
Separat als Drucksache

- 1 Clubflagge
- 1 Charterbuch
- 1 "Rotarier" Nr. 12/II

I. Schriftführer



Emil Hirsch



Thomas Mann

Here is the response from the Rotary Club of Munich, signed by its first secretary Emil Hirsch.

“Your Club’s idea, that we Germans should smoke the peace pipe with you in the spirit, is delightful. When your letter was read to us at our last luncheon, we unfortunately did not have a suitable pipe on hand and had to make do with cigars. We hope that this was a worthy replacement.”

As humorous as these lines may sound, Hirsch’s own membership in Rotary came to an ignoble end. He was expelled from the club as a Jew in April 1933, one year after this letter, and had to vacate his successful antiquarian bookstore in 1935. In 1938 he was able to emigrate to the United States, bringing along a large number of his valuable books. There he worked in a well-known antiquarian bookstore on Madison Avenue in New York.

At the time of Emil Hirsch’s expulsion, club president Wilhelm Arendts wrote the following lines to another member: “You will no doubt

have followed the developments in Germany sufficiently to understand that we consider your removal from our list of members unavoidable. Yours faithfully, the President of the Rotary Club of Munich.”

The member who had been excluded was the writer Thomas Mann. When he was granted the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1929 for his novel *Buddenbrooks*, the event was elaborately celebrated, and the club prided itself on having such a special founding member. Mann had a Jewish wife, however, and soon was considered to have a “Jewish interrelationship” and in the eyes of the Nazis had committed “racial defilement.” In 1942 the Rotary Club of West Los Angeles made him an honorary member. Thomas Mann and Emil Hirsch were not the only ones who were deemed unacceptable; by June 1933 the Rotary Club of Munich had expelled a total of 26, or approximately 40% of its membership. Max Weinmann, who had been invited to the Rotary Convention in Vienna in 1931 as a highly honored speaker, committed suicide in 1940.

April 12 th 1932

To the Rotary-Club of Keokuk Iowa U.S.A.

The Rotariens of Keokuk

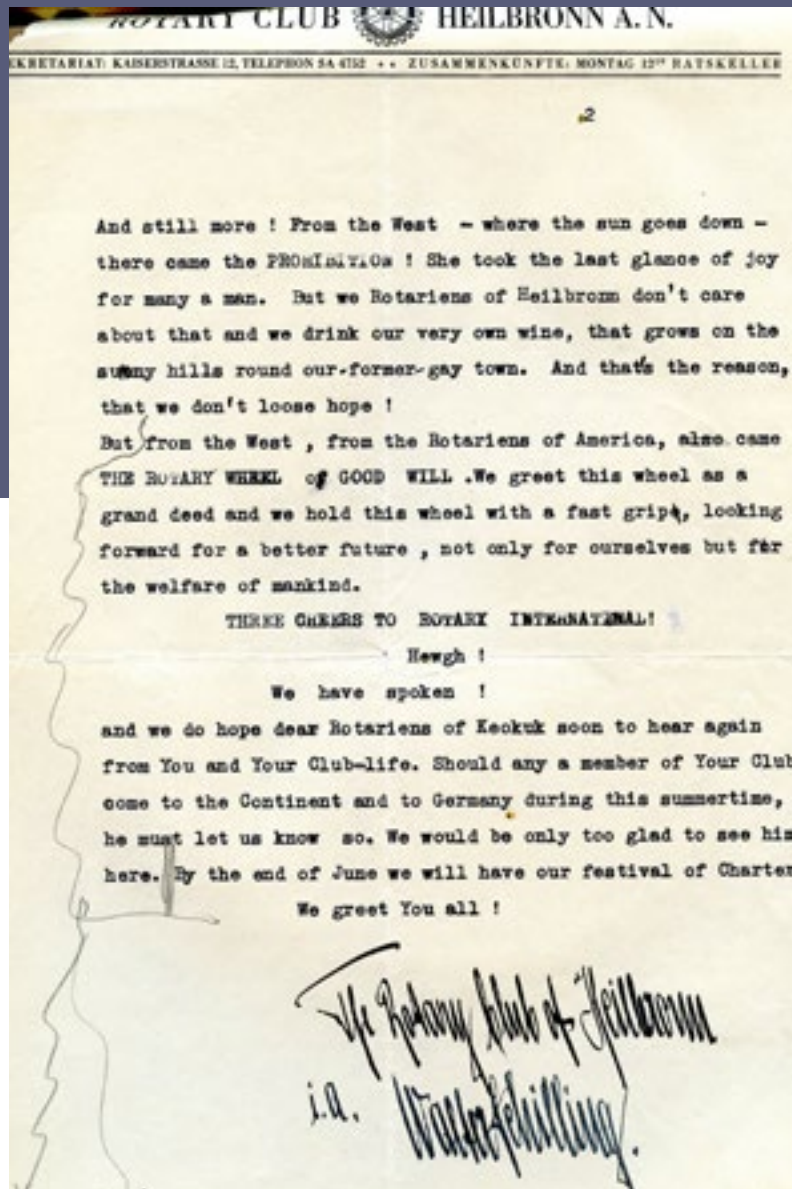
have smoked the pipe of peace and asked us to join them. We know the tradition and the meaning of the pipe of peace. Long ago - being sonny chaps - we have read heaps of books about Your proud red heroes, about ~~was~~hawk and pipes of peace. We ourselves smoked the Pipe of Peace, or at least tried to do so. But we are spry to say, that sometimes we got rather sick of it. It only was on account of the bad stuff we put in our pipes - for there were only leaves of Chestnut for chaps like us.

But to day we remember those grand sayings of those indian Chiefs we read about in the ~~rather~~ classical books of our "Karl May". We are sure You know them.

Once upon a time the Great Manitou loved his red children, the Prairies ~~were~~ full of buffalos, the rivers full of fish. And when his red children were on the path of war he was leading them to victory. But from the East, where the sun rises, there came great canoes filled with white men. With beastly fire-arms they destroyed the bodies and with liquid fire - filled in Brandybottles - they destroyed and ruined the spirit of the red sons of Manitou. They were struggling for life and nearly annihilated. And there only remained the question Of TO BE OR NOT TO BE.

We Rotariens of HEILBRONN smoke the pipe of peace and Speak:

Once upon a time we too were blessed by a great God above us. But then there came the people of the whole world and we too were struggling for life and nearly annihilated. They were too many for us and the sunny times faded away.



Here is the response from the Rotary Club of Heilbronn, signed by Walter Schilling, an entrepreneur in the coffee business who was a founding member of the club. In his two-page letter he draws a parallel between the “red sons of Manitou” (referring to Native Americans) who had to defend themselves and their land against the white man, and the Germans of his time, who were beleaguered by a great wave of refugees.

Schilling writes:

“Once upon a time we too were blessed by a great God above us. But, then there came the people of the whole world, and we, too, were struggling for life and nearly annihilated. They were too many for us, and the sunny times faded away.”

Schilling is referring here to the great wave of

refugees during the Weimar Republic—eastern Europeans who fled to Germany from the ruins of the collapsed Russian Empire.

Many Germans did not welcome the largely Jewish refugees of that time, who were housed in emergency dwellings “at the expense of German taxpayers.” People were afraid of increasing pressure on the already damaged economy, the threat to inner security, and the “Judification” of the western world. The German census of 1925 recorded approximately 108,000 foreign Jews.

There were protests throughout the country, attacks and riots. Newspapers that had spoken out for democracy and the humane treatment of immigrants were defamed as the “Jewish press.” We know that the National Socialists took advantage of these sentiments for their own purposes. And we now see clear parallels in our present situation...



ROTARY KLUB BERLIN

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DIREKTOR DR.
OSKAR SEMPELL

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GEH. BAURAT
PROF. DR.-ING. E.H.
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ADOLF MORSBACH
HEINRICH V. GLEICHEN

4.1.1932.

An den
Rotary Klub Keokuk Iowa USA

Lieber Chairman Fulton!

Herzlichen Dank für Ihren Brief vom 17. Dezember, über den wir uns sehr gefreut haben. Gerade in diesen ersten Zeiten, in denen in Ostasien der Krieg offenentbrannt ist und Unfrieden fast überall in der Welt herrscht, sind solche Freundschaftszeichen immer sehr willkommen. Bitte übermitteln Sie Ihrem Präsidenten und allen Mitgliedern Ihres Klubs unsere herzlichsten Grüsse und den Ausdruck der Freundschaft, der uns deutsche Rotarier mit allen amerikanischen Rotariern verbindet.

Mit Rotary Gruss

Ihr

Sekretär



Paris 1940; Albert Speer, Adolf Hitler and Arno Breker, Hitler's favorite artist, who joined the RC Berlin in 1935.

At the Rotary Club of Berlin, established in 1929 at the Hotel Kaiserhof in the presence of several Rotarians from other countries, the leading lights of Berlin society gathered: politicians, industrialists, scholars, artists, and writers. Among the founding members were the former Weimar Republic chancellor Hans Luther. Foreign diplomats were among those who appeared regularly at the Club meetings.

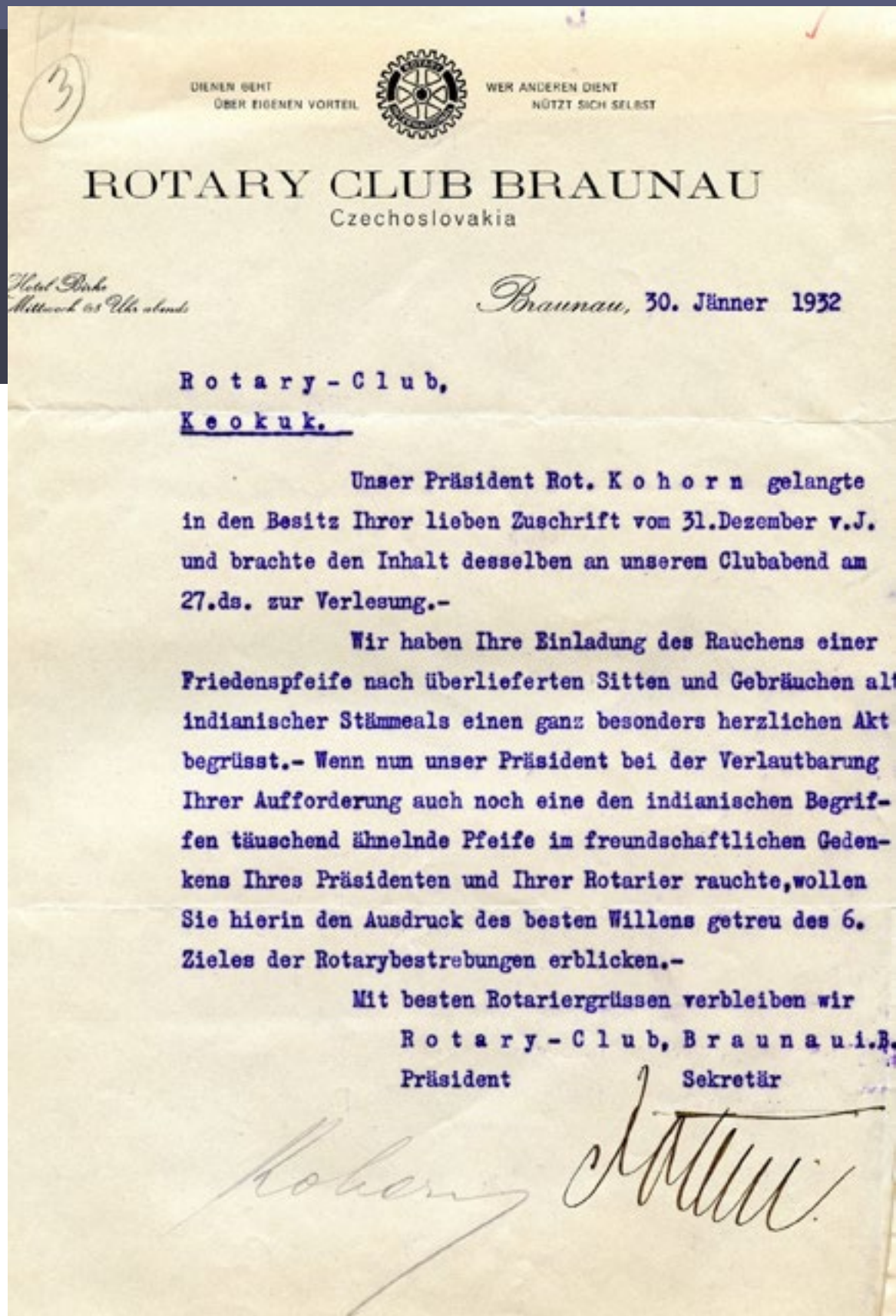
The response letter to Keokuk is signed by the secretary, Heinrich von Gleichen. Here is what he wrote:

"Precisely in these grave times, in which war is raging in East Asia and conflict prevails almost everywhere in the world, indications of peace such as those expressed in your letter are always welcome! Please extend to your president and all of your Club members our most cordial greetings along with the expression of our friendship, which connects us German Rotarians with all those in America."

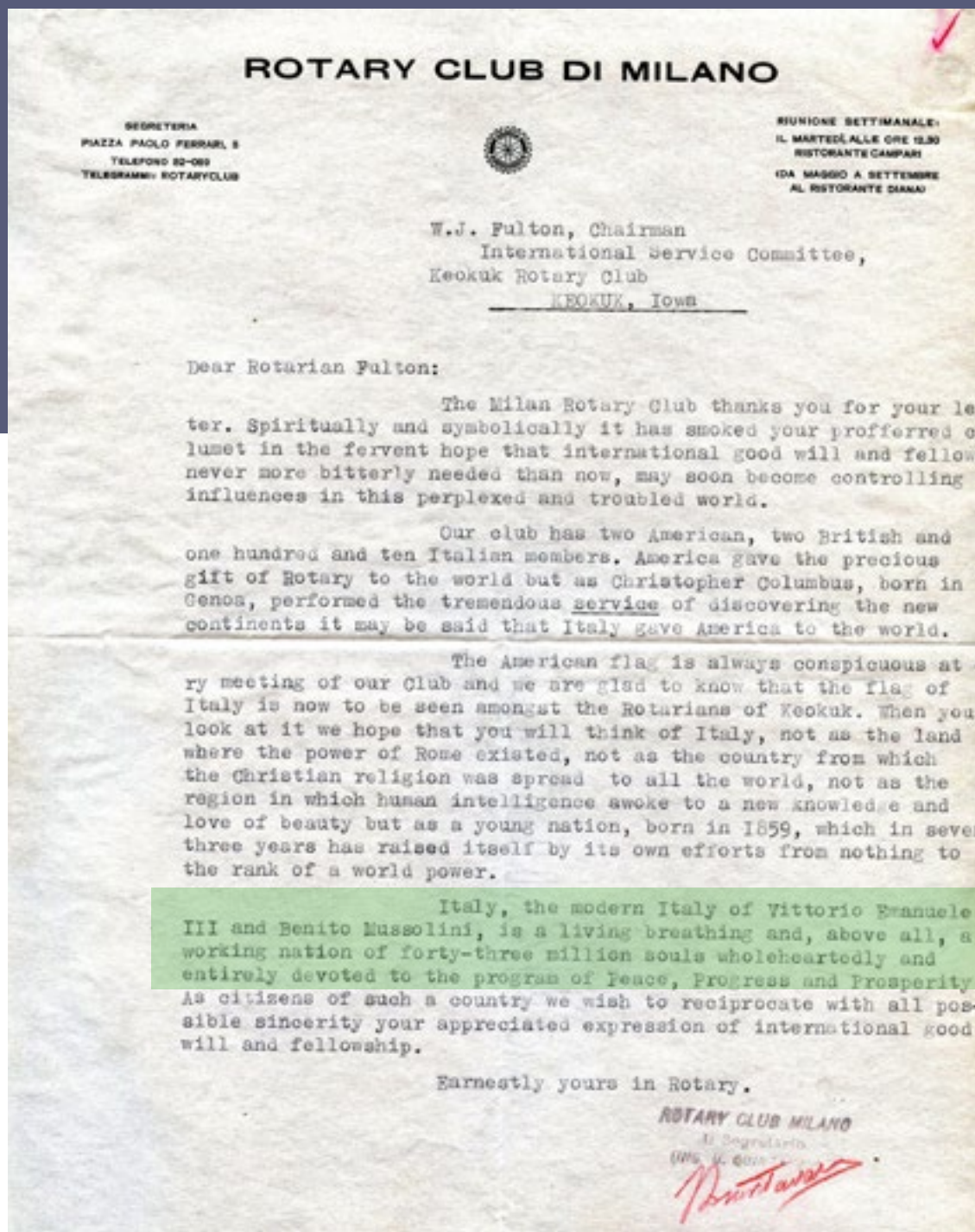
Raimund August Heinrich, Baron of Gleichen-Rußwurm – this is his full name – was one of eighty-eight German writers who signed an oath of faithful allegiance to Hitler in October 1933. Heinrich von Gleichen launched the Dirksen Foundation, which was intended to further contacts between traditional society elites and National Socialists. Leading Nazis such as Heinrich Himmler and Ernst Röhm sat on the foundation's board of trustees.

Heinrich von Gleichen was arrested by the Russians after World War II and detained for several months. Following his release from captivity he fled from the Soviet zone to West-Germany, where he died in 1959.

Berthold Manasse, who was Jewish, held the office of treasurer from 1929 to 1933. Following temporary detention in the just-mentioned concentration camp in Buchenwald, he emigrated to Shanghai and later returned to Berlin, where he died in the 1980s.



This is the letter from the Rotary Club in Braunau. People are startled at the mention of this name, but in this case it does not refer to Hitler's birthplace. The town is located in what once was Lower Silesia and is now known as Broumov in the Czech Republic. Braunau had been settled by German Bohemians for the most part up until 1945, which explains why the text of this letter from 1932 is in German.



Here is another letter response, this time from the Rotary Club di Milano, Italy. It was written when “Duce” Benito Mussolini had almost reached the peak of his dictatorship – tolerated by the Italian King. The secretary uses pathetic words of pride, here:

“Italy, the modern Italy of Vittorio Emanuele III and Benito Mussolini, is a living breathing and above all a working nation of forty-three million souls wholeheartedly and entirely devoted to the program of peace, progress, and prosperity.”

One can find similar sentiment in the letter from the Italian Rotary Club di Novara, located 30 miles West of Milan. Its president Alfredo Pariani writes:

“We feel much honored that Italy’s flag has been so well received by your Club and we are particularly grateful to the giver of it who has remembered our country, which, by means also of the Rotarian Clubs, shows vital strength and eternal youth which has its foundation in Rome. Youth made new again by our Risorgimento and Fascismo – resurrection and fascism.”

ROTARY CLUB DARMSTADT

Präsident:
DR. KARL MERCK

Vizepräsident:
DR. KARL HAPPICH

Schatzmeister:
KARL NEUSCHAEFFER

Sekretär:
WALTER TRIER

Zusammenkünfte:
JEDEN DONNERSTAG 13-30 UHR
IM HOTEL ZUR TRAUBE

Briefe:
ROTARY CLUB DARMSTADT
HOTEL ZUR TRAUBE

Telegrammadresse:
ROCLUB DARMSTADT

Fernsprech-Anschluß 4355



DARMSTADT, DEN 13. 1. 1932

An den
Rotary Club Keokuk

Keokuk / Iowa (U.S.A.)

Liebe Rotarier!

Wir danken Ihnen sehr herzlich für Ihren Brief vom 17. Dezember an unseren Präsidenten Dr. Karl Merck und für Ihre guten Wünschen zum neuen Jahr.-

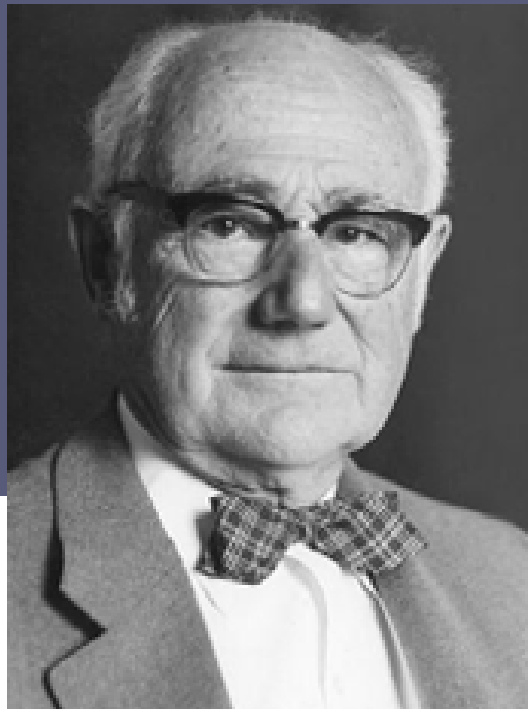
Gern benutzen wir die Gelegenheit, um mit Ihnen eine Friedenspfeife zu rauchen, wenn wir dies auch nur in Form von Zigarren oder Zigaretten tun können, da in unserer Gegend sehr wenig Pfeife geraucht wird; aber wir danken Ihnen jedenfalls herzlich für die wohlgemeinte Geste und hoffen, dass durch Rotary und insbesondere das 6. Ziel eine weitere Völkerverständigung erzielt wird.- Gerade wir hier in Deutschland leiden ausserordentlich unter den allgemeinen Verhältnissen, hervorgerufen durch die unerträglichen Folgen des Kriegsausganges und wir können nicht genug nach aussen hin die unglücklichen Folgen dieser sogenannten Friedensverträge bekanntgeben, um bei möglichst vielen Bürgern der Welt die wirklich ausserordentlich schwere Lage unseres Vaterlandes zu schildern.-

Wir hoffen und wünschen, dass die für dieses Jahr in Aussicht genommenen Konferenzen eine Erleichterung der Allgemeinheit und damit für unser Vaterland bringenmögen und verbleiben

mit herzlichen Rotary-Grüssen
Rotary Club Darmstadt

Hon. Secr.

Here is the response of the Rotary Club of Darmstadt, signed by its secretary, Walter Trier.



President of RC Darmstadt 1932, Dr. Karl Merck



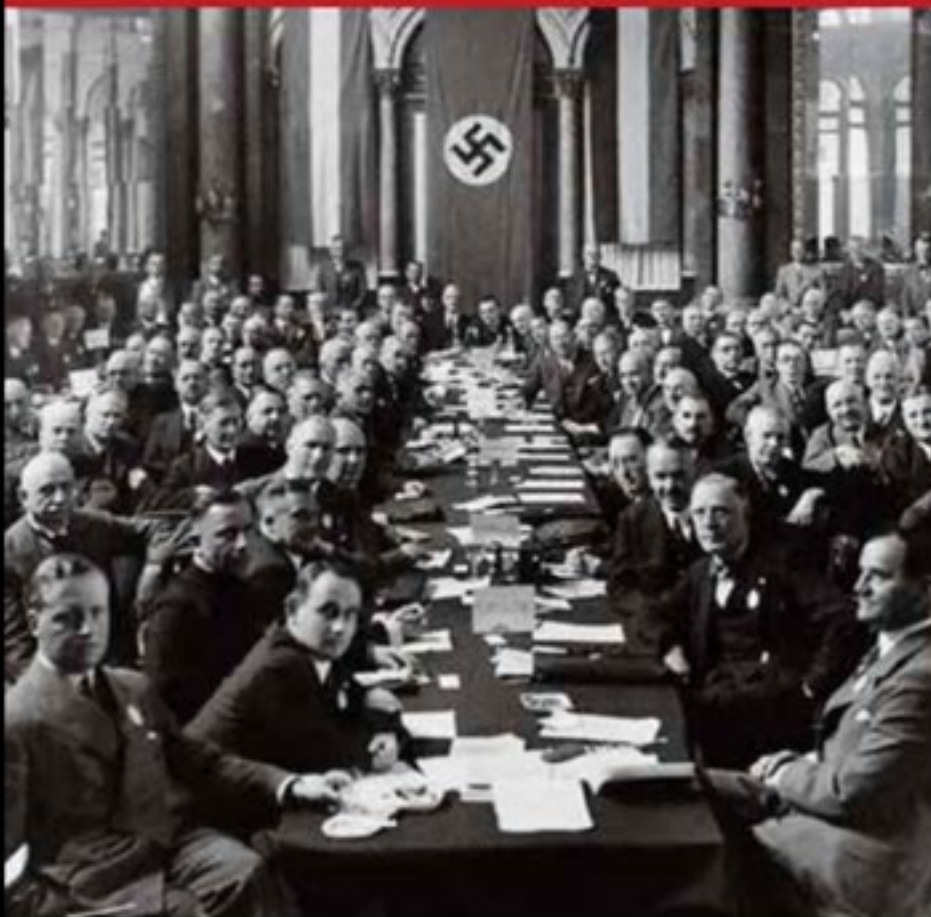
Walter Trier together with his cousin Ernst—also a member of the club— ran the Trier Furniture Factory, which supplied European royal houses with its products. Walter was able to flee to England in 1936, but Ernst committed suicide following the forced sale of his business in 1938.

In the upper left-hand corner of the letter (p. 18) is the name of the president at that time, Dr. Karl Merck. In 1932 he became chairman of the executive board of the Merck family business. In the Nazi period he also held many public offices, including the Reich Professional Group of the Pharmaceutical Industry and the Leadership Committee of Health Experts of the National Socialist Party. Merck's factory used a great number of forced laborers. In the context of denazification, however, Karl Merck was not classified in the group of active participants, but only had to make a payment of 2,000 Reichmarks as a fellow traveler.

It becomes clear that the lives of the various Rotarians inevitably developed in different directions.

Rotary under Nazi Rule

Learning from the Past
for a Better Future



Photograph of a Rotary district meeting in Wiesbaden, Germany from the year 1935

This book is available at [KEOKUK PEACE LETTERS, llc](#) . Cost is \$15 + postage.

(Get both books, *The Keokuk Peace Letters* & *Rotary Under Nazi Rule* for \$40 + postage)

Anthony Conn • 3466 265th Ave • Keokuk, Iowa, 52632 • USA • +1 515.418.5865 • Conn.Tony.2013@gmail.com



The website

memorial.d-1800.org, and the highly commendable book *Rotary under Nazi Rule* point out that between 1932 and 1933 a total of 500 names disappeared from Rotary membership lists—almost one-third of all Rotarians in Germany at that time. Rotary International hardly intervened, perhaps out of fear of reprisals from the Nazis.

Only a small number of clubs showed solidarity with their Jewish members. In 1937 all German and Austrian clubs were finally banned and dissolved. At the end of the 1940s, new clubs were founded or re-established, in part with individuals who had held important positions during the Nazi dictatorship.

The photograph on the left is of a Rotary district meeting in Wiesbaden in the year 1935. The original was retouched for a postwar publication...

...and the swastika replaced by the Rotarian wheel. As if it were possible to whitewash history after the fact...

Fais aux autres
ce que tu voudrais
que les autres
te fissent.



Celui qui sert
le mieux
profite le plus.

HONNEUR
: AMITIÉ :
PROBITÉ

ROTARY CLUB DE CHARLEROI

MEMBRE DU ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

DEJEUNER :

Tous les lundis,
à 12 h. 30,
GRAND HOTEL,
Place E. Bulsset, 12

TELEPHONE :

Nos 127 & 1017
Grand Hôtel (lundi)
de 12 h. 30
à 2 h.

CHARLEROI le 9th December 1931.
Belgique

W.J. Fulton, Esq.,
Chairman,
International Service Committee,
KEOKUK ROTARY CLUB,
KEOKUK IOWA U.S.A.

Dear Rotarian Fulton,

The President of my Club who, unfortunately, does not know the English language, has handed over to me your letter of the 19th ult.

I wish to thank you very much indeed for the kind message which the letter contains and which, you may rest assured, has been received by all the Members of the Charleroi Rotary Club, with the greatest enthusiasm.

We were very interested in reading the origin of the name of your town and the history of the smoking of the peace pipe. We are certainly smoking the peace-pipe with you in spirit! In spite of the fact that, just now, very dark clouds seem to be hanging all over the world, we nevertheless are in hopes that, at a future date, a better understanding will prevail between all the people, bringing them closer together.

We were rather glad to hear that one of your Members presented your Club with a flag of our country. May we ask you if the Member in question is a Belgian? It is rather nice to hear that someone living thousands and thousands of miles away from our little country should have had the wonderful idea to offer the flag of Belgium to your Club!

Addresser
in correspondence:
Rotary Club,
Grand Hôtel, Charleroi.

This three-page-letter shows the other side of the coin. It was written by Arthur Regnier from the Rotary Club of Charleroi in Belgium, a country bordering on Germany.

Fais aux autres
ce que tu voudrais
que les autres
te fissent.



Celui qui sert
le mieux
profite le plus.

HONNEUR
: AMITIÉ :
PROBITÉ

ROTARY CLUB DE CHARLEROI

MEMBRE DU ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

page 2

DÉJEUNER :

Tous les lundis,
à 12 h. 30,
GRAND HOTEL,
Place E. Buisson, 12

CHARLEROI le 9.12.31
Belgique

W.J. Fulton, Esq., Chairman
International Service Committee,
KEOKUK. U.S.A.

TÉLÉPHONE :

Nos 127 & 1017
Grand Hôtel (Jundi)
de 12 h. 30
à 2 h.

Our town is not very big. We only have a population of about 28.000. However, Charleroi is situated in the heart of one of the largest industrial districts, the total population of which amounts to approximately 500.000 people.

Besides a large number of coal mines, we have, in the neighborhood of Charleroi several Window- and Plate-Glass Works, Iron and Steel Works, Electric Works, Engineering Works, Marble and Stone Quarries, etc.

No need to tell you that our district is greatly affected by present conditions of trade, we have thousands and thousands of unemployed and it is with a certain amount of anxiety that we see next winter season approach, when so many will suffer from the fact that there will not be much money left in the house to buy the necessary food.

Anyhow, let us hope for the best. The Belgian population has shown, in many circumstances, and more particularly during and immediately after the terrible war of 1914/1918, that it is not short of courage and initiative and I have confidence that we will, after all, go through present difficulties with the assurance that better times are bound to follow as there is no doubt that the people will soon open their eyes and adopt methods which are more in harmony with the general welfare of mankind.

Adresser
la correspondance :
Rotary Club,
Grand Hôtel, Charleroi.

I am sending you, by same mail, a couple of booklets showing you some views of Charleroi and also of the School for Crippled Children which was erected in our town some 25 years ago and which the Charleroi Rotary Club has



The responses from all over the world were mostly typed, though a few were hand-written, sometimes with beautifully designed letterheads. Here is an example from the Rotary Club in Gefle, Sweden. On the following page are the typed weekly minutes of the Rotary Club in Turin and the stylish letterhead of the Rotary Club of Johannesburg.



ROTARY CLUB DI TORINO

BOLLETTINO SETTIMANALE N. 386

RIUNIONE DEL 20 GENNAIO 1932/X

COMUNICAZIONI

Nella prossima riunione di mercoledì 27 gennaio il consocio Comm. Ing. Giulio Cesare Fuortes, Direttore del Circolo Ferroviario di Torino, farà una breve comunicazione su: "Gli Autoservizi di grande Turismo" (Conferenza Internazionale di Merano).

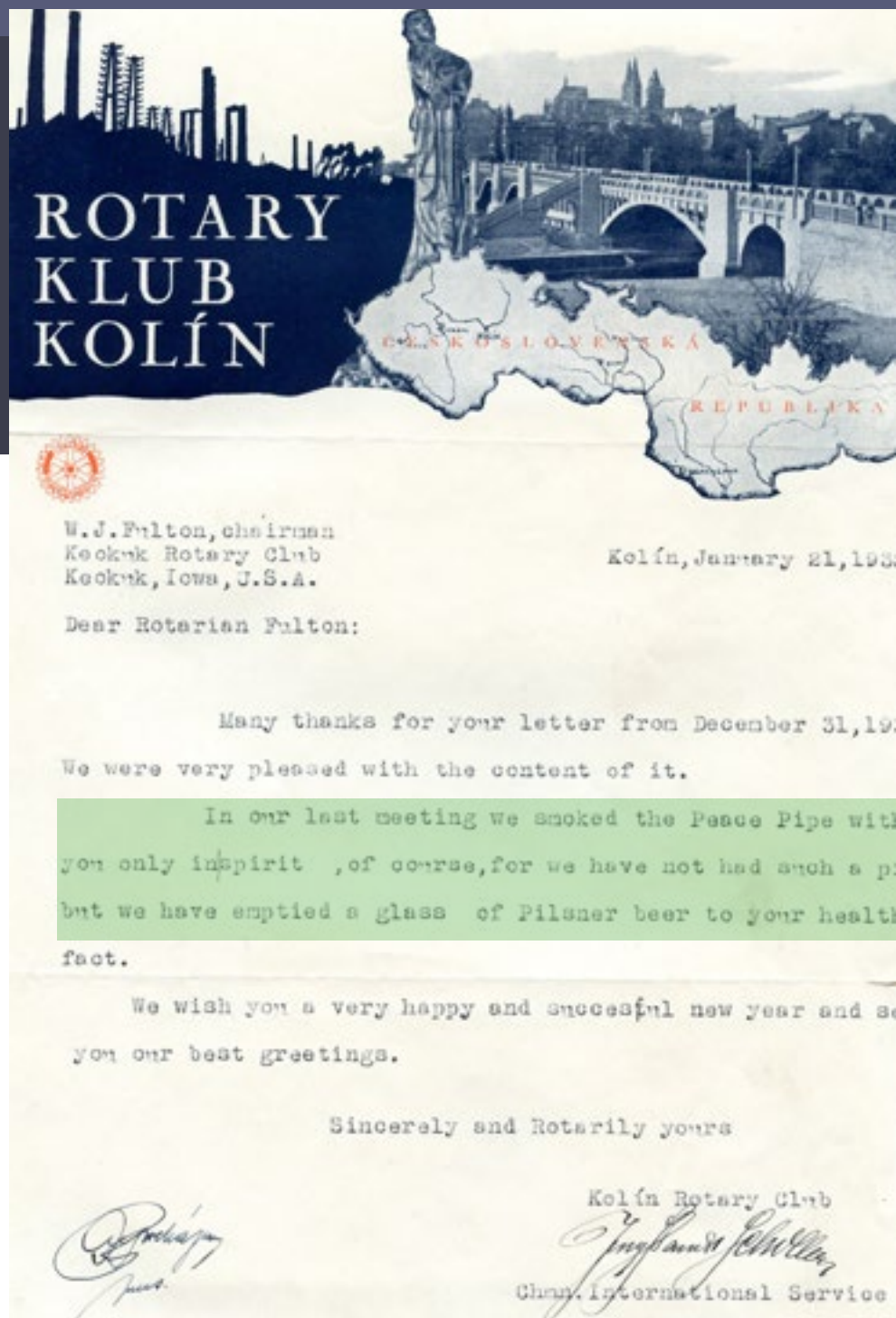
Togliamo dalla Weekly Letter, notiziario che viene inviato settimanalmente dal Rotary Internazionale a tutti i Presidenti e Segretari dei Clubs,

"HE PROFITS MOST WHO SERVES BEST"



P.O. BOX 1212, 667,
JOHANNESBURG, S.A.

9th March, 1932.



This is the response from the Rotary Club of Kolin in the Czech Republic. The text says:

"At our last meeting we smoked the peace pipe with you—only symbolically, of course, since we did not have a pipe of that sort on hand; instead, we drank a glass of Pilsener to your health."

On the next page is the response from the Rotary Club of Oroshaza in Hungary, with a suitable illustration.

ROTARY CLUB
OROSHÁZA.

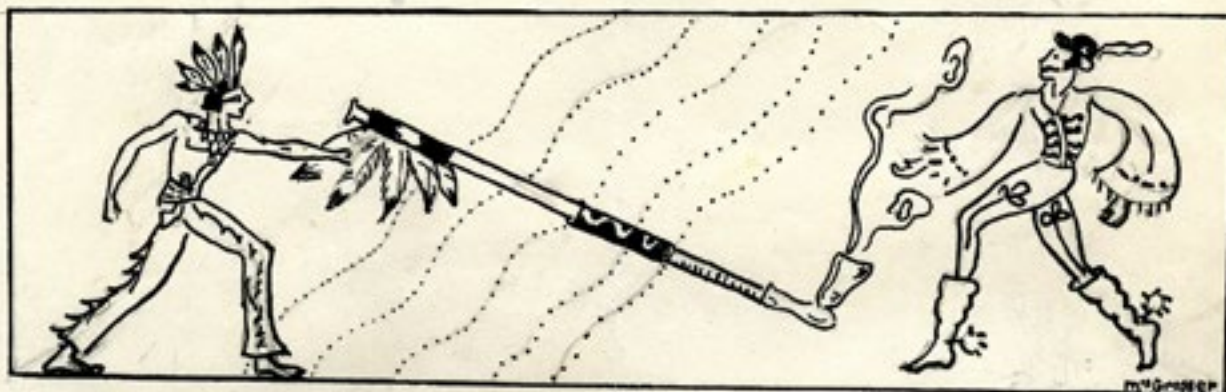
ELNÖK: (President)
DR. BERTHÓTY KÁROLY
(Dr. Charles Berthóty)

(HUNGARY)

CHARTER NO. 3423.

TITKÁR: (Secretary)
HÉZER BÉLA
(Béla Hézer)

Orosháza, *the 14. Jan. 1932*
Hungary



4

Rotary Club,

Keokuck /Iowa/ U.S.A.

Dear Sirs,

Our little picture shows you how delighted our symbolic Hungarian is accepting your indian pipe of peace offered to him across the Ocean.

Might every nation imitate you by smoking the "calumet" once fore ever with each other.

Sincerely yours

Hézer Béla
secretary

P. O. Box 191
Telephone 274

✓
ENGLISH MISSION HOSPITAL,
JERUSALEM,
PALESTINE.

December 23 1931.

Dear Rotarian Fulton,

Thank you very much indeed for your most interesting letter which I read out at our usual Rotary luncheon today. We all enthusiastically endorsed the sentiments expressed therein, and expressed ourselves as ready to smoke the pipe of peace with you in spirit. I was assisted in the pronunciation of the name of your town by a Chicagoan opposite to me, a founder member of our Club, and by his two guests. One of them was a visiting Rotarian from Utica N.Y. and the other was the American Vice Consul. We have all sorts in our Club, about ten nationalities, at least five different languages represented, and we all find in Rotary a common meeting ground in spite of differences of Race, Religion, and Tongue. We have strong Zionists and equally strong Anti zionistic Arabs in the Club. Britishers, Americans, and Germans etc. And they all meet amicably as Rotarians, although acutely disagreeing on most other points. One of my warmest friends is a German Surgeon who, as a combatant officer, faced the trenches at La Bassee in which I was serving. So you will see that we are ourselves a sort of living Pipe of Peace always being smoked.

We certainly do appreciate the spirit of friendly cooperation exemplified by your letter and send you all our very heartiest good wishes for the New Year. When you look at your Palestine Flag (which by the way greatly intrigued us as we do not know really what it looks like), Every country here flies its own, and the British flag is flown over all Government Offices etc. But I believe that there is now for Customs purposes a Palestine Flag, the Union Jack with Palestine in the corner. Think of us as a polyglot collection of people all trying to do our bit for this little land, and all thinking friendly thoughts for all Rotarians.

yours very sincerely in Rotary

H. J. M. King

President

Rotary Club of Jerusalem

Palestine

Today we enjoy a close friendship with the Rotary Club of Jerusalem, the only English-language Club in Israel, which did not exist in 1931. This Club, originally sponsored by RC Cairo, sent a letter of response to Keokuk, on the day before Christmas 1931. The Rotarian spirit is very well expressed here.



Dr. Joachim "Yogi" Reppmann was born in 1957 in Flensburg, in the state of Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. He matriculated at the University of Kiel, where he studied history, American literature, and philosophy. Yogi has traveled widely in the United States and has written several books on notable Schleswig-Holstein emigrants and the mass migration to the United States; served as a professor of German at St. Olaf and Carleton Colleges in Northfield, Minnesota; and chaired several conferences.

The Steuben Society of America's History Award for 2014 was presented to him for his research on the 1848 movement's democratic impact in Germany and in the USA. www.moin-moin.us



Anthony Conn is a field agent for Knights of Columbus Insurance as well as president of Conn Communications, Inc., a wireless communications agency in Iowa and Missouri. He served for 10 years in the United States Army as an officer in the Corps of Engineers, stationed at posts in South Korea, Germany, and United States.

Anthony is a graduate of St. Ambrose University with a B.S. in Mathematics. He has served on many civic organizations in his community and is currently a board member of the Keokuk Area Community Foundation and Rotary International. He is President and co-founder of Rotary Keokuk Peace Letters, llc., a non-profit organization that promotes world peace and international understanding.



We rescued this Rotarian treasure in 2016 and published all 504 letters from around the world. It is extremely fascinating to study these letters against the background of their historical context, and at the same time, to find a great deal that bears resemblance to our own time. We strongly recommend to you our publication titled *The Keokuk Peace Letters, 1931/32 & 2019 – Letters to Friends*, a truly stimulating book. All letters from 1931-32 are pictured in its 331 pages.

It is available via Lulu.com

Cost is 30 Dollars; all profits are funneled to a special tax free account through which Rotarian peace projects are financed.

Epilogue

We have now reached the end of our Rotary Keokuk Peace Letter story and would like to give you a brief update—because the story that began ninety years ago is continuing today...



On the Danish side of the Flensburg fjord all the Rotarians enjoyed excellent hot dogs à la Denmark next to the summer palace of the Danish queen.

In 2019

the Rotary Club of Keokuk, Iowa, wrote again to every club that received the original 1931 letter from Iowa. We wanted, once again—specifically at the Rotary Convention in Hamburg—to gather and discuss our hopes for peace in the world. And so, the Keokuk Peace Letters brought together in that city 135 Rotarians from 68 clubs in 21 countries. All these new Rotarian friends traveled in two large buses to Gitta & Yogi Reppmann's spacious apartment in Flensburg, the border town to Denmark.

With the *Rotary Keokuk Peace Letters: Nationalism, Then & Now* as background, Jim Hart (RC Saint Paul, MN), Tony Conn (RC Keokuk, IA) and Yogi Reppmann (RC Flensburg & RC Northfield, MN) are organizing an international Rotary work conference on the subject of *Democracies under Pressure* - How to Shape our Future - Dealing with the Past* which will take place as a hybrid event (attendance/video) in October 2021 in Northfield, Minnesota (forty miles south of Minneapolis). You & your club are cordially invited.

One discussion point at the conference will concern how to find appropriate ways of dealing with the dark chapters of history. For example four hundred years of slavery in the USA will be discussed, as well as Germany's confrontation with the Holocaust.



* *Twilight of Democracy: The Seductive Lure of Authoritarianism*, book by Anne Applebaum

The Spirit of Rondo

by Jim Hart



View of Rondo Land Bridge towards St. Paul



Dr. Marvin Roger Anderson & Dr. James Hart, both RC Saint Paul, MN.

The United States

is known as a nation of immigrants, but of course not all immigrants came here by choice. The most dramatic example of forced immigration are the millions of African slaves who were captured and brought to North America beginning in the 16th century.

Prior to emancipation in 1865, most of these African slaves worked on southern cotton, sugar, and rice plantations. Thereafter, the freed Africans migrated in various directions, many to the north. Some of them came to St. Paul, MN and built a thriving community called Rondo.

Sadly, in the 1960s, the Rondo community was largely destroyed when I-94 was built right through the middle of the community. Over 700 homes and 300 businesses were lost.

But now there is a movement to literally rebuild the Rondo community by constructing a massive land bridge over I-94 between Dale

Street and Lexington Avenue. The project is called ReConnect Rondo and would create 15-21 acres of buildable land above the interstate.

Marvin Roger Anderson, chair of the ReConnect Rondo board, whose parents lost their home in Rondo when I-94 was built, said the project is so much more than infrastructure. He said he hopes to reknit the fabric of the community.

"It's as much about the culture of Rondo as it is about the physical space itself," Anderson said. "What gave Rondo its special flair is the exuberance in which people lived together, which we hope to capture there." (Minneapolis Star Tribune, 3/26/21).

On October 21, participants in the "Dealing With the Past" conference in Northfield, MN will have the opportunity to visit the Rondo neighborhood and hear from Mr. Anderson, Chair of the ReConnectRondo Board and Keith Baker, Executive Director of ReConnectRondo, in an inspiring presentation about "healing for the 21st century".

Learn more on www.reconnectrondo.com

A Flensburg Perspective — Erna de Vries and the Holocaust Boxcar

by Friedhelm Caspari, Husby, Germany



Erna de Vries

When Berlin

lay in ruins and following Hitler's cowardly suicide, the North German city of Flensburg wrote a chapter of its own history in the first days of May 1945. This city on the border with Denmark welcomed thousands of German refugees from the eastern territories and people who had been freed from the concentration camps.

In 2015 Gitta and Yogi Repmann from Flensburg organized the transportation of what can be called a "Holocaust boxcar" from a forest in central Germany to the impressive Fagen Fighters World War II Museum in Granite Falls, Minnesota, where it is now on display. On January 12, 2017, the Auschwitz survivor Erna de Vries, age 97, was featured in the filming of an "Untold Story" in the city of Flensburg. Integral to the background of the story is the fact—certainly unknown to most of us—that in the final days of the war hundreds of top-brass Nazis went into hiding in this city, which briefly became a sort of new "capital of the Reich."

The story of the boxcar is inseparably connected with the history of the Nazi death camps. Erna de Vries (née Korn) makes a journey through time more than seventy years after her liberation. Once again she is sitting in a train, just as she was at the time she was taken to Auschwitz in an ordinary railroad passenger car. Memories of that journey, on the way to the intended annihilation of the Jews at the hands of the Nazis, resurge in her mind.

Now she wants to see and feel how the perpetrators, who considered themselves members of the master race, showed their true colors at the end of the war. Three days before the surrender on May 8, 1945, several of the mass murderers, among them SS Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler, Auschwitz Commandant Rudolf Höß, and the Chief Inspector of Concentration Camps Richard Glücks, met at police headquarters in Flensburg.

At this meeting the contempt of these war criminals for mankind was no longer the point, but only how they could go into hiding. Their last stop was a flight from responsibility.

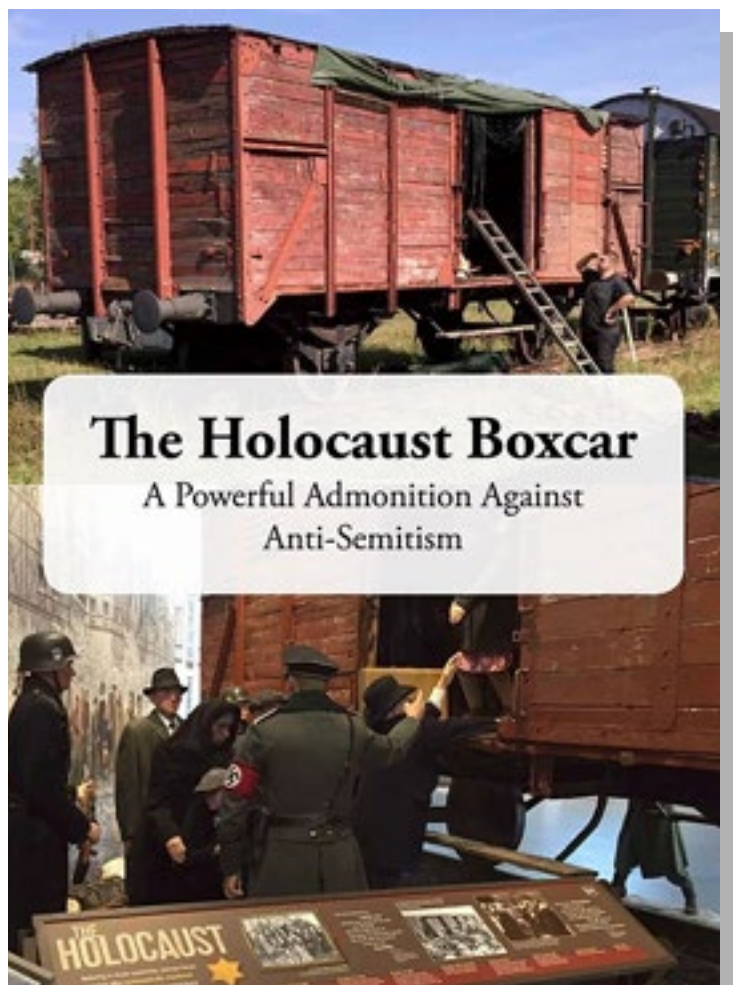
Seventy-one years after this meeting, Erna de Vries sits in this room for the first time, remembering

her own path of suffering in the very same location where the perpetrators of these crimes were unmasked one final time as unscrupulous criminals. With the arrest of the final official state government on May 23, this town now becomes the last stop for the entire band of Nazis. The Auschwitz survivor looks at the cells in the building, experiences once again her liberation and the end of both the Second World War and the Nazi top brass.

With her visit to the town where one final scene was played out following the surrender, the circle is closed. She has survived and can now set out to tell subsequent generations about the Holocaust and the cowardly murderers who perpetrated it.

Erna de Vries and Holocaust Education in the 21st Century (video 18:37 min) is on

www.salve.tv



The period of National Socialism in Germany and the horrors of the Hitler regime cannot be understood apart from the political and societal developments that preceded them. The events that took place between the wars and during the Nazi dictatorship have been analyzed, illuminated, and described many times. The literature on the structure of the Nazi system and on its leading figure, the “populist” Adolf Hitler, has thus been published extensively and in many languages.

For the first time, however, there is now available for world-wide readers a highly compact “Fact Book” that illuminates the most important aspects of the developments in Germany in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The book “The Holocaust Boxcar” is available on www.moin-moin.us

סלועה תא הנשנ התאו ינא

“You and I, we can change the world ...”

The Altes Gymnasium

in Flensburg, founded in 1566 by the Danish king Christian IV, has attained a significant milestone in German education through an exchange program between its students and those of the Yigal Alon High School in Rishon Le’Zion, Israel.

The program, under the leadership of Jane Peters and Dr. Jan-Christian Schwarz, was established in 2009 and has resulted in three exchanges so far (Flensburg students to Israel and Israeli students to Flensburg), with a fourth temporarily on hold due to the Covid crisis. Along with funding from the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and the Willy-Brandt-Stiftung, local businesses in Flensburg and the surrounding area have been instrumental in supporting this program.

Following their in-family stays in Israel, many of the Flensburg students have called the experience “the trip of a lifetime.” Both they and Dr. Schwarz have seen that the past, as difficult as it may have been, can be seen as an element of connection rather than of separation.

Despite opposition from some quarters to the establishment of the program, it has ultimately proven to be an important stepping stone in the expansion of international understanding. The German Foreign Office in Berlin has taken note of the special nature of the Flensburg program and has invited Dr. Schwarz, who has been a member of the faculty of the “Altes Gym” since 2005, to give a lecture at an upcoming event there on the subject of student exchange programs with Israel.



Jan-Christian Schwarz

Jan-Christian Schwarz studied German and history at the University of Kiel. His focus was on Jewish history, and once he had completed his studies he worked as a historian at the Jewish Museum in Berlin. Since 2005 he has been teaching at the Altes Gymnasium in Flensburg.



German and Israeli young people as guests of the Jewish congregation, Flensburg, Germany



Flensburg Gymnasium students following a visit to Yad Vashem

Encounter at the Entrance to “Hell”

by Matthias Schütt



Today,

not far from the former German extermination camp Auschwitz, a pleasant meeting center brings young people from all over the world together with eyewitnesses of that dark time.

Oswiecim, a city of about 40,000 inhabitants in the south of Poland, casts a long shadow. Although its townspeople can look back on 750 years of history, it took only a very few years during the Second World War to darken the city's reputation for all time. Under its German name Auschwitz, Oswiecim became the largest extermination camp of the National-Socialist German government, where according to official estimates as many as 1.5 million people were

systematically killed. The largest groups of victims were Jews from Germany and the regions occupied by Germans, prisoners of war and resistance fighters who were mostly Russians and Poles, but also Sinti and Roma.

Auschwitz has become a symbol of “the collapse of a civilization.” This accusation concerns an intellectually highly developed society that unscrupulously placed its technological and scientific advances in the service of genocide. The collapse in question had consequences for both the victims and the perpetrators that extend far beyond the postwar period and continue to affect relationships among European nations.

The first venture out of the torpor following Auschwitz was an initiative called “Reconcilia-

tion for Peace" (ASF) in which Germans in Poland, Russia, Israel, and other countries carried out volunteer services. The reception given to these services—the first steps of a process that is characterized today by the catchphrase “coming to terms with the past”—took place in an unimaginably unfavorable situation. On the one hand, the atrocities committed during the war were to a large extent still being repressed or even denied in both West and East German society, while at the same time the oppressive conditions of the “Cold War” between East and West made efforts at interaction enormously difficult.

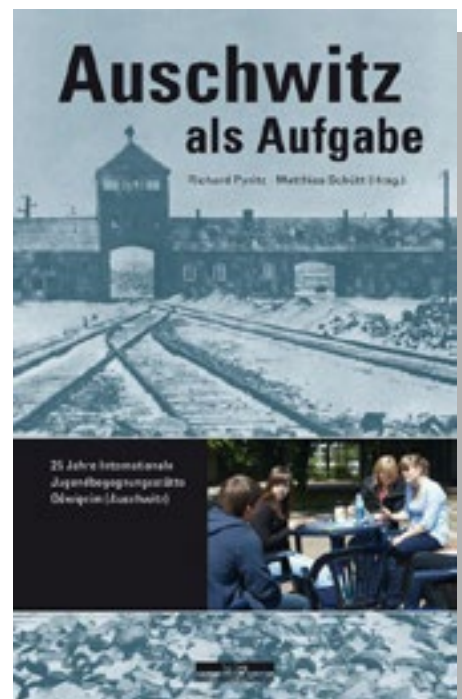
Because of this, those responsible for the ASF choose the term “miracle” when they look back on the utterly improbable success of their work. And yet another widely known, luminescent miracle is the International Youth Meeting Center in Oswiecim (IJBS) that was constructed in 1986 in socialist Poland at the West German initiative of the ASF and today brings together annually over 160 travel groups of young people from the entire world who meet under the slogan of “Never Again.” The first building block was acquired symbolically by the former Chancellor Willy Brandt at the Protestant Church Congress in 1977. The financing of the structure was taken on by church congregations, private donors, government institutions of the Federal Republic and the federal states, as well as by Volkswagen Inc.

But before the meeting center with its accommodations for one hundred attendees could be opened, many time-consuming discussions and hesitations, which can be explained only in part by the world political situation, had to be dealt with. First of all, the views of the West German donors were diametrically opposed to those of the Polish architects. As the German architect Helmut Morlok (1929-2017) recalled in looking back, his Polish colleagues wanted to build the meeting center directly on the grounds of the camp, which he considered to be wrong. “At the immediate location where the crimes were committed,” he said in summarizing his uneasiness, “the young people from the various countries would grow silent; they would shut themselves off rather than opening up.” Learning about the past and understanding it was, after all, in his opinion only one of the matters to be dealt with; it was just as important to make what was

experienced here a useful aid toward the future peaceful coexistence of humanity.

This argument ultimately won the day and made it possible for the meeting center to be built on the edge of the city center of Oswiecim, in a bright and friendly atmosphere that lent itself to reflection, communication, and relaxation—an area in which the visitors would be able to process the impressions of their visit to the extermination camp in conversation with others.

Thousands of visitors each year confirm the decision that was made at the time in reaction to Morlok's advice. Being able to approach one another is easy for the young guests who come from all different cultures. And a second important encounter takes place in addition through conversations with eyewitnesses, which are part of the established program of the IJBS. Many former prisoners of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp are regularly available to express through their personal memories what it was like to live in the “hell of Auschwitz.” At present it is a major task of the IJBS to retain this legacy, since the eyewitnesses who still are there to tell of their experiences continue to become fewer and fewer.



Richard Pyritz / Matthias Schütt - Auschwitz als Aufgabe. 25 Jahre Internationale Jugendbegegnungsstätte Oswiecim (Auschwitz), 2013, www.bebra-wissenschaft.de



Matthias Schütt (RC Ratzeburg - Alte Salzstrasse, Germany)

Stumbling Blocks

German pedestrians are learning to stumble. In over 1,265 cities and towns in Germany so-called “stumbling blocks” in front of individual houses commemorate Jewish fellow citizens who were taken away from them and murdered. The artist Gunter Demnig, through his idea of placing these little plaques in the pavement, took a major step in helping make history visible in these public spaces. By now over 75,000 stumbling blocks have been installed.

This initiative has a double significance: it gives individual victims of genocide their name and their dignity back, and compels each passer-by to think about what happened here. Processing the criminal practices of the years between 1933 and 1945 has been underway in Germany for decades, although it has often been apparent only in intellectual circles. But everyone stumbles over these stumbling blocks...

Rotary Clubs in Germany were slow to examine their role in that terrible phase of history. But now a start has been made, as the article on pages 10-21 demonstrates. It represents a contribution to Rotarian goals that will hopefully lead to a reconsideration of moments in American history that have been repressed as well.

Why do we not learn from one another?

p'review - Peace. Inclusion. Equity., this Rotary/Rotaract online-magazine is an attempt at opening up lines of communication on such topics in order to clarify the role of Rotary In-

ternational in the areas of peace and conflict prevention. The motto *Peace – Inclusion – Equity* indicates that the widest variety of incidents – including those of recent times – should be part of the discussion. Whether it is a matter of the criminal acts of colonial days, the expulsion of indigenous populations, slavery, the genocide of the Jews, or daily examples of racism against ethnic minorities that take place even in supposedly model democracies – all these situations demand answers that an institution such as Rotary, with its dedication to the common good, must not fail to consider.

The Keokuk RC, a small Club in Iowa, took up this challenge on its own volition many years ago and set a striking example whose positive effect continues to this very day: by sending peace letters to Clubs in all the countries of the world in 1931 it appealed to our common commitment to good will. The rediscovery of these letters (see account on page 29) was the initial stimulus for our idea of pondering Rotary's mission together.

And so let us sit down together, first of all online, through this magazine. Additionally, however, an initial hybrid conference on these topics is currently in the planning stage: From October 18-23 a Rotary/Rotaract working conference will take place in Northfield, Minnesota, USA.

Matthias Schütt

p' review

Peace. Inclusion. Equity.



Let's Blow the Peace Harp

by Konstantin Reinfeld

Hello everybody!

My name is Konstantin Reinfeld. I am 25 years old and I study jazz at the Hamburg University of Music and Theatre with the prospect of pursuing my doctoral studies this year. As of late this is actually a possible path to take after receiving a master's degree in fine arts. One of my instrumental teachers is Howard Levy from Evanston, Illinois. But more on this later.

First of all, I'm really delighted that I can make a contribution to this Rotary/Rotaractor newsletter. The philosophy of Rotary, whose international headquarters oddly enough are located in the city where Howard Levy lives, is very congenial to me. I first got in touch with the organization in Düsseldorf back in 2013. Within the framework of an event organized by the Rotarian Jazz Fellowship I played one of my first concerts with a piano trio to showcase my own compositions. Not long after, I paid a visit to a Rotaractor group in Cologne, which is just an hour's drive from my hometown of Kempen. The location and the excellent reputation of the Cologne University of Music and Dance induced me to begin my music studies there.

KEEP YOUR GOAL IN SIGHT

However, I first had to overcome a few hurdles involving the instrument that I had fallen in love with in 2008 as a thirteen-year-old. I would like to tell about this in detail because it comprises an important message for other young people: Whatever it is you hope to attain, always keep your goal in sight and don't let anyone knock you off course! Have faith in yourself and persevere!

When I applied to music colleges in 2014 with the harmonica as my main instrument, I certainly received pitying smiles here and there. Contempt, paired with little knowledge about the nature of the harmonica, still resulted in the instrument's shadowy existence two hundred years after its invention and one hundred and fifty years after the beginning of its industrial production. It was not until later that I read Herbert Quelle's highly interesting books *Monika's Blues* and *Kein falscher Zungenschlag: Black Music Matters* to learn that the American Federation of Musicians was hesitant to accept harmonica

players as members until 1948. In the United States, of all places, where the harmonica was able to show its true character for the first time in the blues! I will come back to this later as well.

In any case I finally accomplished what I had hoped for and was accepted as a student. I had wished to work with a piano teacher in my major, thus I also competed against pianists in my auditions. For this reason I ultimately did not have to take the customary jazz piano minor and was able to decide on jazz singing. In 2018 I concluded my studies in Cologne with a Bachelor of Music.

THE DISCOVERY

But let me go back to the very beginning. It was the German casting show "Das Supertalent" that triggered my enthusiasm for the smallest instrument capable of playing three octaves. In late 2008 Michael Hirte had won the hearts of his viewers with his interpretation of "Ave Maria" on a Hohner Blues Harp. I was among those who were immediately captivated by the sound and the expressiveness of the instrument. On the following day I visited our local music store to purchase the winning harmonica model along with an instruction book by Perry Letsch called "Blues Harp". After one year of practicing I performed the song "You Raise Me Up" at the 350th anniversary of my school, the *Gymnasium Thomaeum* (founded in 1659).

The exceptional reception reinforced my intuition of finally having found the instrument through which I could really talk. The instrument enables me to express my deepest feelings. At the same time it is hard for viewers and listeners, who can barely make out the harmonica in the musician's hands, to understand how its sounds are being produced. Even as a player it takes some time to comprehend the hidden physics of the harmonica and to master the countless possibilities of expression.

Playing harmonica is a feeling. Here, after all, there are no fingers flying over a keyboard, no contorted grips on the neck of a violin, or drumsticks racing across timpani and cymbals. Everything happening between the performer's diaphragm and his lips, which are usually hidden by his hands, remains invisible. This might



Wayne Eddy, Radio Talk Show Legend, Jesse James & Herbert Quelle with his book publication:
"Monika's Blues: On the Trail of the German Harmonica and African-American Blues Culture"

be a reason why many listeners underestimate the harmonica at first glance.

THE ONLINE WORLD

However, my desire to master the instrument was relentless and receiving positive feedback from harmonica enthusiasts all over the world online was very energizing at the same time. The possibilities for learning something new are endless nowadays. Unlike earlier generations, we are able to benefit from more and more educational material on the web. I have been teaching by means of YouTube tutorials and online lessons for many years now myself and I stay active on a great variety of social media platforms in order to communicate with music and harmonica fans while connecting with the very active community all over the world.

By contrast, the first trendsetting African-American blues harmonica players were com-

pletely self-taught pioneers in sound. Even today, grand masters like Deford Bailey are still unequalled in style. At most they were able to copy phrases and techniques from other players after visiting live performances or, later on, to improve their playing by imitating and transcribing from vinyl records.

INNOVATION

Even many years after World War II, instructions published by harmonica manufacturers such as Hohner did not contain any hints on how to play blues on the ten-hole diatonic harmonica tuned to the so-called Richter tuning. Starting with the development of the instrument it took more than a hundred years until players realized its full potential. Not only the nineteen default diatonic notes could be played on it, but even all thirty-seven semitones of the chromatic scale across three octaves! Indispensable stages

along the way were the innovative achievements of African-American players, who gave preference to the draw notes, resulting in the advancement of the bending technique. Experts connect the first overblow to be heard on record with the name Jazz Gillum. Through the systematization of chromatic playing on the diatonic harmonica it was finally around 1970 that the harmonica pioneer and multi-instrumentalist Howard Levy established the instrument in the world of jazz and its related genres.

For me the ensuing developments in this area are of equal importance to the music played by chromatic harmonica legends such as the Belgian Toots Thielemans. Hendrik Meurkens from Germany lives in New York City and is an example of the many players who stand in Thielemans' tradition. As the above-mentioned Herbert Quelle never tires of pointing out, we are dealing with a unique symbiosis of German hardware and American sound in every respect.

GERMAN HARDWARE - AMERICAN SOUND

This symbiosis goes back to the second half of the nineteenth century. The increasing demand from abroad and from the United States in particular was the decisive growth engine for the entire German harmonica industry.

Over one hundred harmonica factories sprang up and this branch of industry created thousands of jobs into the 1930s. Although the two remaining German manufacturers only have 150 employees today – 30 at C. A. Seydel in Klingenthal (the oldest harmonica factory in the world, founded in 1847) and 120 at Hohner in Trossingen (founded in 1857) – they continue to be represented not only at the international music fairs in the United States, but can be spotted among the major sponsors of the annual conferences of the American Society for the Preserva-

tion and the Advancement of the Harmonica.

According to Herbert Quelle, the United States may well have imported close to 250 million harmonicas from Germany between 1860 and today. The Golden Twenties, which saw the establishment of thousands of American harmonica orchestras, had its special share of this enormous number. In 1926 and 1927 alone, the staggering number of twenty-one million pieces arrived in the United States. Today's manufacturers can only dream of such scales, given that leisure time activities and consumer habits have drastically changed. Still, I would consider it a success if my work could contribute to a greater awareness of this excellent, many-sided instrument whose history is so intertwined with German and American culture.

Being awarded the OPUS Klassik (the German Grammy for classical music) in 2019 was a big step forward and not only an award for my art but also an appreciation of the instrument. The stimulus for this article was not a music-historical assignment, but rather the upcoming conference this October on the Keokuk Peace Letters sent by the Rotary Club in Keokuk, Iowa in 1931.

Although there are exceptional situations where music is abused for ideological purposes, it is beyond question for me that its predominantly peaceful nature can bring people together. In this sense there is a close connection between these two realms.

There were two wars between Germany and the United States during the last century. Like my parents, I can consider myself lucky to have experienced peaceful times only. But it is important to remember historical events in order to avoid making the mistakes of earlier generations. In this context, I hope that we can also acknowledge man-made climate change as the greatest challenge of the future and tackle it effectively.

Join Konstantin Reinfeld on

[youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) [twitch.tv](https://www.twitch.tv) [instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com) [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)

Herbert Quelle's Books are available on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

FANATIC

A Novel by Norman Watt

Soon after accepting a position as German instructor at a tiny college in the remote hills of Kentucky, Colin Ritter takes on a challenge posed by the founder of the college over a hundred years earlier: if he can use his exceptional talent as a puzzle master to solve a convoluted series of riddles, he stands to become the owner of a work of art of incalculable value.

As he slowly makes progress, he is faced with another problem—that a colleague of his may be harboring several paintings appropriated from German Jewish collectors during the Third Reich. With Colin's subsequent amateur detective work comes the belated realization that he has put his life on the line.



Norman Watt is a retired professor of German language and literature who specializes in translations of family documents from the eighteenth-century to the present day.

When my wife Gitta and I traveled from Flensburg in the north German state of Schleswig-Holstein and arrived in Northfield, Minnesota in the fall of 1992, we had little if any idea of what exactly a “liberal arts college” was.

And here we were in a small American town that had two of them, no less—Carleton College on the other side of the Cannon River and St. Olaf College, where I soon would be teaching in the German Department. Norman Watt was Chair of the Department at the time.

I soon learned that his major scholarly interest was in the area of translation—of literary and historical texts, of old family documents and so on. Only years later did I find out that he was working on a novel as well.

He told me that it was based on a variety of German-American themes, one of which focused on a German immigrant, Lukas Baumgartner, who had fought in both the German revolution of 1849 and the American Civil War. When he added that the novel's setting was a small American college campus, I knew that it was a book I simply had to read.

On the following pages are a few excerpts from Baumgartner's Civil War diaries.

Cincinnati, 21 December 1860

What a catastrophic event! Brazen South Carolina has dared to secede from the Union. This is only the beginning, I fear. Other states will soon follow suit, and what is to happen then? Mr. Lincoln cannot and will not allow this great nation to be cleft in twain. But how is he to prevent it? War, alas, will be his only recourse. Ah, that it must come to this!

Cincinnati, 5 February 1861

Word has come of the formation of an unholy alliance which those in the South call the Confederate States of America, and it is apparent where this will lead. Will I, too, soon have to go to war again?

Cincinnati, 13 April 1861

Fort Sumter has been attacked. War between the two powers is now inevitable. But this must be seen as a necessary evil. The disease which has raged in the South of this nation for two centuries, eating away at the moral fibre of those who dwell there, both colored and white, must be combatted with strong medicine. Slavery is the name of this disease—nay, it is worse than a disease, it is a crime against humanity which may no longer be tolerated. Mr. Lincoln is right in all that he has said concerning this subject. I pledge my honor that I will march with my fellows when the time comes.

Cincinnati, 17 April 1861

The throngs at Turner Hall this evening uplifted my heart. It was as if every young German of the city, and many not so young, had appeared at Mr. Lincoln's call to volunteer. Many with whom I spoke had, like myself, fought against the Hessian or Prussian troops during the revolution in Germany. Fine speeches were made, upholding the cause of freedom. There will be no difficulty in finding the thousand men who will make up the Ninth Ohio Regiment. We have been told that it will be sent for training in a matter of days to a camp not far from here.

Camp Harrison, Ohio, 26 April 1861

We arrived at camp two days ago by train. There are several other regiments gathered here as well, but as long as I remain in the area in which the Ninth is quartered, it is almost as if I were once again in Germany. Almost, I say, because one does hear the occasional and unavoidable English word. Only our Colonel McCook, beloved by all, speaks but little of our language.

When I went to Baden, I was young and foolish. How could I have imagined that a handful of irregulars and a few revolutionary-minded soldiers could overthrow the combined forces of several German monarchies? In the present instance, however, the bulk of the country is on the side of right, as is the power of the established government. And Mr. Lincoln has said that we must have faith that right makes might. Victory will surely come swiftly.

Camp Harrison, Ohio, 17 May 1861

Our training here draws to a close, as tomorrow we are to depart for Camp Dennison, the main collecting point for Ohio troops. There we are to

receive uniforms and rifles and will, I believe, be heading into action sometime in June. I can imagine no better commanding officer than our Colonel McCook, and spirit among the men continues to be high. From this point on, I suspect that I will have little time to add to the pages of my diary.

Mill Springs, Kentucky, 20 January 1862

Over the past months our regiment has been involved in several inconsequential skirmishes, which pale in comparison to yesterday's encounter. The Ninth had already won respect on both sides for its bravery, and this will be even more the case following our bayonet charge which routed the enemy. We mourn the loss of six of our number, and many more from the other Union regiments involved, but the Rebel losses must have been far greater.

near Athens, Alabama, 5 August 1862

I must record a terrible act of treachery. Our beloved Colonel McCook, while lying ill in an open ambulance and defenseless, has been killed by so-called guerrillas! The vengeance taken by several of our side in burning down the houses where these men live, is of little consolation to me and my comrades. Our division commander, General Thomas, has announced that it would be better for us to seek vengeance on the battlefield, and this we will certainly strive to do.

Chicamauga, Tennessee, 22 September 1863

Our division, already famous for its bayonet charge at Mill Springs, has succeeded in another which scattered the enemy and resulted in the recapture of an artillery battery. Thus the Ninth has once again shown its undaunted bravery. The battle was not won, however, and we were instructed to retreat to Chattanooga and work to build fortifications. The war continues and does not appear to be approaching its end.

Chattanooga, 29 November 1863

Once again I am part of this world; I was, so I am told, unconscious for the better part of three days. When I awoke my dear friend and fellow "Niner" Fritz Bauer was sitting by my side, his arm wrapped in bandaging. Fritz reminded me of our division's activities on the 25th inst. – our taking up of positions alongside Missionary Ridge, the enemy's fierce cannonading, and our bayonet advance on the rifle-pits at the foot of the ridge. All this I remembered as if it had happened but an hour before. As for the rest, I can only believe what Fritz has told me: that I threw myself between him and two rebel soldiers as they charged him. Suddenly I saw a blinding flash of light – a light so intense, so searing, that it seemed to set my brain on fire. A moment later I perceived myself as something akin to a rifle-ball, being propelled at enormous speed through a gun barrel; I swirled and swirled along the rifling, but did not grow dizzy. Soon my journey was over, and the most ineffable beauty I had ever experienced lay before me: a world of the greenest grass and trees, and the bluest, clearest sky – a world in which it seemed that time did not exist – a world populated by countless animals of every description, all at peace with one another, and by people of all races, frolicking hand-in-hand through the woods and meadows. Far, far away in the distance, there stood a splendid castle.

I saw all these things as I roamed about this world. Then, suddenly, I was awake again. And my head, my poor head – never before have I known such pain.

Fritz has kindly put these words down on paper for me, for I felt the need to preserve them. But now I can speak no more, I must rest.

Enjoy Norman Watt's College Campus Novel "FANATIC" on www.moin-moin.us

Reflections on American Liberal Arts Colleges

by Yogi Reppmann

Soon after our arrival in Minnesota, my wife Gitta and I started to learn about the various points of difference between American colleges and the institutions of higher learning we were familiar with in Germany—our large universities in which relatively few students qualify for enrollment.

The size of the American institutions turned out to be the first major difference: liberal arts colleges are relatively small—enrolling anywhere from several hundred students to as many as a few thousand. This means that virtually all students can be housed in dormitories on the campus itself, rather than being scattered around a city and left to find accommodations on their own.

Second, the standard length of study at a liberal arts college is four years, and only one category of advanced degree is offered—the baccalaureate, further subdivided into the general categories of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science.

Within this framework students are encouraged—indeed required to a certain extent—to complete coursework in fields beyond their major area of study. Prominent among these—at St. Olaf College, for example—is the foreign language requirement of four semesters for all students.

Living in the relatively close quarters of a college campus creates a sense of the value of teamwork, friendliness, and inclusion. This is in fact a major emphasis of most colleges—to further students' social as well as intellectual development, to give them guidance concerning their goals in life as they consider future professions and to help them develop previously unknown talents.

As I see it, with the arrival of each incoming student on campus (generally at the age of eighteen), there begins a paradise of developing creativity and scientific curiosity, of self-awareness and new-found freedoms. I would even venture to say that the combination of intellectual studies with the nurturing atmosphere on college campuses has had great and positive influence on the development of American society from the post-World-War-II period on.

A problem that has grown ever more critical in American four-year colleges over the years is that comprehensive fees for enrollment, food, housing, etc. continue to increase astronomically. While students in Germany often complain about the high cost of university education as compared to "the good old days," American students generally leave college not only with their degree in hand, but also with student loan debts that range into the tens of thousands of dollars.

Ways of reducing the truly high costs of an American college education have been a topic of discussion for years and will continue to be discussed on into the future.

We are tempted to believe that without Liberal Arts Colleges, the "American Century" would not have happened: "The United States had more influence throughout the 20th century than any previous superpower. Almost the entire planet loved huge American automobiles, people revered Hollywood stars, imitated the American Way of Life, and looked at New York as the capital of the world." In: *Crossing the Ocean*, p. 71. www.moin-moin.us



Forma 9006 foil, variable, ca. 50 x 40 x 40 cm, 2020

Lux, lucis - Light — A Visual Rollercoaster

Sandra Schlipkoeter,

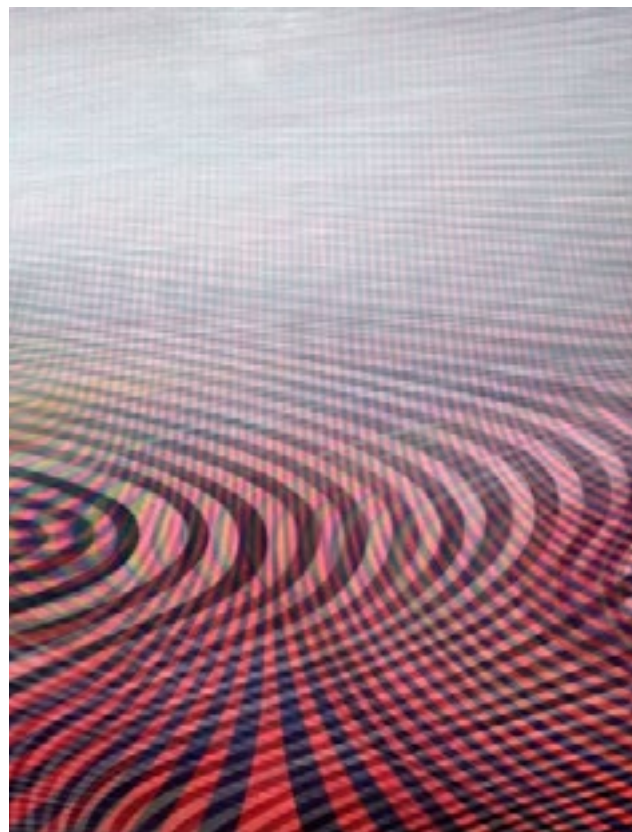
who lives in Berlin today, studied at the Düsseldorf Art Academy with Professor Eberhard Havekost, who was an essential influence in the development of her visual language.

The artist examines a physical phenomenon in its numerous manifestations: light as an immaterial and ephemeral motive. As a medium, light becomes visible in a great variety of never tangible forms that surround us in our daily life. Natural light created by the sun and the moon changes in the course of a day and varies with the seasons. In the history of art, light is a motive with many facets. Gothic church windows transformed daylight into transcendental spaces. In contemporary art, windows depicting religious scenes have become commonplace and achieve great effects through their diaphanous materiality.

Sandra Schlipkoeter, however, uses light in her own distinct way.

The concept of interference is uppermost in the artist's extensive, gripping artwork, which encompasses the realms of painting, sculpture, and installation. In physics, interferences indicate the overlapping that occurs when two or more wave trains meet. The artist visualizes these phenomena and experiments with them. As a painter, she has long since overcome the two-dimensional handicap of the canvas and developed new forms of sculpture in her "Cut Outs" series.

In her wall pieces, Sandra Schlipkoeter overlaps patterns of lines on many planes and plac-



Interferenz 11 |2| 180 x 120 cm, oil on canvas, 2016

es multidimensional layers over each other. The recurring basic form of the wave provides for a dynamism that the eye can barely take in. The color shimmers and vibrates, flickers and glows. Mirrors, which in our usual lives reproduce reality, become reflecting lines that capture and break the light.

Some of her series completely do without the use of color. The white interferences operate be-

tween movement and tranquility, gentle waves and meditative restfulness.

The hanging spatial structures called “Cut Outs” are made of reflective foil and plumb the relationship of surface and line, form and space, points, edges, and waves, being and non-being. Places are important for the artist and animate her to plan spatial pieces and to think beyond the studio in new ways.

Cutting, interlocking, layering, transforming, folding, turning, and reflecting are fundamental parts of Sandra Schlipkoeter's approach in creating her pieces.

When a rainbow appears, the colors of the

spectrum (red, orange, yellow, green, bright blue, blue, and violet) become visible. Using foil as her medium, the artist reflects the colors onto seven specially prepared white rectangular surfaces of equal size that hang behind each other. The effects produced by light and reflection are simultaneously poetic, aesthetic, and celestial. Laws of physics encounter artistic concepts and each completes the other in a congenial fashion.

Sandra Schlipkoeter is a progressive artist who continues to develop her work in a positive direction through her rigorous inquiring and experimentation. Observing her art makes us look forward to the future.

Gisela Elbracht-Iglhaut (Kunstmuseum Solingen, Germany)



5015 foil, Gargonza Arts Festival, 2019



Meinen Bogen setze ich in die Wolken, und er sei das Zeichen des Bundes zwischen mir und der Erde

Plexiglas, foil, 7 parts, 140 x 105 cm each, 2021

Enjoy more of Sandra's art: www.sandraschlipkoeter.com



Dr. Ivan Slokar was a founding member of RC Ljubljana, 1931

upcoming p'review issue #2

+++ latest research - the rc keokuk peace letters world-wide +++

Edvard Škodič, RC Ljubljana, Slovenia, District 1912, established 1931, reestablished 1990, organized a zoom meeting with other *RC Keokuk Peace Letter Clubs*: RC Maribor, RC Klagenfurt, RC Graz, RC Zagreb, RC Trieste, RC Varaždin, RC Subotica, RC Osijek. Latest research about those letters back to Keokuk, Iowa, 1932, was presented by Grace van Zyl (RC Johannesburg), Dieter Ziulkowski (RC Jerusalem), Tony Conn (RC Keokuk, Iowa) & Yogi Reppmann (RC Northfield, MN & RC Flensburg) on April 15, 2021.

Watch our interesting recording of the Zoom Meeting, mostly in English on www.youtube.com.

+++ june 27, 2021, zoom jamboree in india: rc keokuk peace letters, 1932 - 2022 +++



Invite

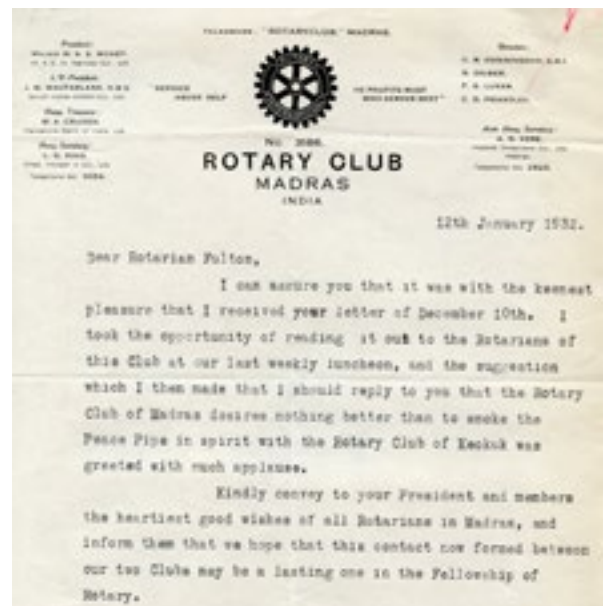
by Lady Rotarian Rizwana Zamindar.
For the Zoom Link please contact any of our supporters:

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p'review arts

+++ m. a. taher (rc sonargaon dhaka) - impressions of bangladesh +++

Photojournalist M. A. Taher, Liaison officer of FIAP (Federation of International Photography), will present his work in p'review #2.



Jan-Reza Sadri

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John Knox Nguyen

www.meetjohn.xyz

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For establishing our *Letter Gallery* www.koeln.rotaract.de

Dr. Jens-Peter “Jay“ Becker, Kiel

www.loomings-jay.blogspot.com www.nixwiekunst.wordpress.com

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p' review

Peace. Inclusion. Equity.

Nationalism, Then & Now How to Shape the Future

A Hybrid Rotary Working Conference

October 18-23, 2021 • Northfield, Minnesota, USA

Tentative Program

October 18

Welcoming party

with food and beverages at Ramblin' Ranch, Dundas, MN – hosted by Northfield Rotarians
Brett Reese & Todd Thomson, composer of the Song *George* (www.kymnradio.net)

October 19

Dehumanizing the Other

Michael D. McNally, Professor of Religious Studies, Carleton College, Northfield MN:
“Reflections on the Native American Genocide” (*invited*)

Joni Sussman, Publisher of Kar-Ben Publishing:
“The Life of a Daughter of Two Holocaust Survivors”

Grace van Zyl, President, RC Johannesburg:
“Lessons from Apartheid in South Africa”

October 20

The Origins of Populism and Authoritarianism

Susan Neiman, Ph.D., author of *Learning from the Germans: Race and the Memory of Evil*:
the experiences of Germans in dealing with the Holocaust and Americans now confronting racism (*invited*)

Antonio Scurati, author of *M*, a novel based on the life of Benito Mussolini,
the blueprint of all populists in the last hundred years (*invited*)

October 21

Tour of the demolished African-American Rondo neighborhood in St. Paul, MN

Participants will visit the Rondo neighborhood and hear presentations by Marvin Anderson, J.D., Chair of the ReConnectRondo Board, and Keith Baker, J.D., Executive Director of ReConnectRondo. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Baker will speak about their plans to construct a half-mile land bridge over a section of Highway I-94 in St. Paul and will offer an inspiring presentation on “healing for the 21st century.” There will also be tours of the Rondo neighborhood and the oldest Black Gospel church in Minnesota, as well as an evening barbecue at the Rondo Plaza and Rondo Center of Diverse Expression.

October 22

From Acknowledgment to Action

On this day participants will reflect on what they have learned in the three previous conference days and develop action plans for themselves and their Rotary clubs (e.g., “Stumbling Blocks”). Our discussion will be led by Dr. William Doherty, PhD, Professor of Family Social Science, University of Minnesota and co-founder of Braver Angels, will talk to us about depolarizing American politics. (*invited*)

